New Nouveau
Brunswick

Schools for a New Century

REPORT OF

The Commission on
Excellence in Education

Commission on
Excellence in Education

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May 7, 1992

Honourable Frank McKenna
Premier of New Brunswick
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Dear Premier:

In partial fulfilment of the mandate given the Commission when it was established in November, 1991, we are pleased to present **Schools for a New Century**, our report on the public school system in New Brunswick. A second report, on post-secondary education, training, and lifelong learning, will be submitted at the conclusion of the second phase of our work.

We wish to thank you for giving us the opportunity to participate in this important project. We trust that our deliberations and recommendations will be of value to our province.

Yours truly,

Aldéa Landry
Aldéa Landry
Commissioner

Downey
James Downey
Commissioner

Aldéa Landry, c.r. / Q.C.
Commissioner, *Commissaire*

James Downey, Ph.D.
Commissioner, *Commissaire*

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CHAPTER I:

Prologue

The Commission on Excellence in Education was created by Premier Frank McKenna in November 1991 with the purpose of

> *fostering excellence in education, training, and human resource development in New Brunswick through a broad consultative process.*

The terms of reference given to the Commission were as follows:

- To assess the role of each major component of the province's educational system in creating a more prosperous and equitable society.
- To identify strengths and weaknesses and opportunities in our educational system and make recommendations to address them.
- To seek ways and means of creating and strengthening productive linkages between education at all levels and its principal stakeholders.
- To define suitable educational goals for New Brunswick and suggest ways of achieving them and of measuring progress made toward them.

(I) CONSULTATION

To stimulate the process of public consultation on the public school system (phase I of the Commission's inquiry), an issues paper was widely distributed. From November to April, more than one hundred meetings were held by the Commissioners, either together or individually, around the province with groups and individuals who so requested. More than four hundred briefs were received in response to the Commission's invitation. While the Commission's existence gave rise to a variety of emotions and reactions, ranging from optimism through apprehension to scepticism, the prevailing spirit was one of generous receptivity, a spirit well expressed in the brief of l'Association des enseignantes et des enseignants francophones du N.-B.(AEFNB), as follows:

> *We believe the time has come to collectively take a halt and think about the future of education throughout the province and the country as well. In fact, the increasingly fast changes that are occurring around us, and the very nature of these changes are challenging us to share our findings on the direction to be taken by education.*

With a modest budget and a short timeframe, the Commission was not able to conduct or sponsor original research into any of the many important issues we have addressed. We did, however, consult published studies of research conducted both in Canada and elsewhere, always mindful that, while ideas from elsewhere could stimulate creative thinking, creative solutions would have to be forged here in New Brunswick. In this regard, both our meetings and the briefs provided a good reality check. We were greatly assisted about halfway through our assignment when l'AEFNB and the New Brunswick Teachers' Association (NBTA) each published a substantial report on educational excellence as seen by the teachers of the province. These reports, together with the many meetings we held with teachers and the briefs received from them, helped to deepen our understanding of the concerns and aspirations of the teaching profession.

We also heard and read many informative and insightful submissions from parents, business, labour, and community leaders, academics, and students. Throughout the period, the media kept a keen and generally supportive watch on our work and provided their readers, listeners, and viewers with much useful information on educational issues.

(II) ISSUES

Inevitably, over the course of five months' intensive consultation and deliberation, views are crystallized and ideas, one hopes, refined. Some issues which were either not raised or were peripheral to Issues Paper I have been identified as important to the pursuit of excellence in this report. On the other hand, some matters raised in the first issues paper loom smaller here, not because they are thought now to be less important than they were then, but because they form part of a broader context. One issue—the reorganization of school districts—was largely removed from the Commission's agenda by recent government action. We think it appropriate, however, to comment in this report on the kind of role we believe the new boards might play.

By and large, respondents liked our guiding principles (reproduced for convenient reference in Appendix B), but were more sceptical of some of the goals proposed for discussion. This, incidentally, squared with our own views of those two parts of the earlier document.

Opinions were sharply and at times cuttingly divided on "The Challenge" section, with a significant number of respondents sharing the belief that we had drawn too close a connection between schooling and the economy at the expense of other educational purposes. One particularly trenchant commentator summed it up thus:

> *It may indeed be the case that "education is the key" (or at least one key) "to a prosperous economy," in the broad sense that a good level of general education seems, historically, to have favoured industrial innovation, and facilitates training. To demonstrate specific short-term links is, however, much more difficult ... and it may be well to recall the warning in an OECD publication, that the school "can have little direct or short-term impact on the economy, and is wasting important resources if it tries."*

This seems to us fair comment. The nexus between education and the economy is indeed more long-term and complex than many felt was indicated in the issues paper. It is, however, none the less important for that. The market place in which today's students will have to make a living is undergoing transformational change. While schools cannot be expected to train people for jobs, they must be responsive to the needs students have to prepare themselves to lead productive economic lives. In chapter 2 of this report we attempt to strike a balance among educational ends.

We wish to emphasize a couple of other points made in "The Challenge" section of the issues paper. In offering a definition of education as "all of the activities, formal and informal, by which individuals and a society seek peaceably to transform the world," and "envisioning that better world and acquiring the skills, knowledge, and values to build it," we were affirming that schools have a liberating as well as a socializing role. This will be more true in high school than in the earlier years, but part of the role of schooling is to lead youngsters to examine critically the dominant values of society and to render them less vulnerable to the various hucksterisms—commercial, political, and philosophical—that are a feature of our own or any other time. To do this is not to undermine the social order; on the contrary, it is to strengthen it by constantly applying the tests of reason and fairness.

The other "Challenge" point we wish to stress is the necessity of creating in New Brunswick an environment conducive to the development of an education culture, a culture based on and centred in learning. If the only place educational reform is achieved over the next few years is in our schools, then it will not last. It must also take place in our communities, with greater emphasis on activities and programs that facilitate both basic and cultural literacy; it must come about in the workplace, with more sponsored upgrading and training of employees and their managers; it must be a priority of government, with a sustained commitment to those programs that enhance human potential.

Above all, educational reform must happen in the family life of New Brunswickers, with more time spent in reading to children, helping them or finding help for them with their homework, connecting with their teachers and schools, and instilling in them by precept and example the importance of educational achievement. Parents must come to see their role as sharing in their children's learning, not as a chore but for the pleasure and challenge that co-operative learning provides. After all, schools are not the only place children learn, or the only institution from which they either graduate or drop out. For this reason the spirit of co-operative learning must extend to relations between the school and the home. Teachers and parents alike need to remind themselves that family activities may not only support but actually complement the school. The Commission is aware of course that not all families are able to respond to this challenge in the desired way. We can only hope that where the family is unable to do its part, the community, through its social support agencies and the enlightened generosity of volunteers, will attempt to compensate. Only to the extent that we can cause such things to happen will an educational culture come about in our province, and excellence in education become more than a slogan.

(III) EXPECTATIONS

There is a widespread belief that significant change is needed in our education system. That view is fuelled by several different but related concerns. Some say that the schools are not doing enough to assist students to develop their individual talents and reach their full potential. Some have told us that schools are not imparting the proper social skills and moral values. Still others believe that educators are not preparing students sufficiently well for productive and successful economic lives.

There seems to be a consensus that the answer to this dilemma is not a narrow curriculum focus on "the basics." Central though the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic remain, and essential though their mastery is to all educational pursuits, they are no longer, if they ever were, enough. The challenge is greater: it is to cultivate in all children the capacity to think for themselves both analytically and creatively, to communicate effectively, to know where to find and how to use knowledge, and to develop a pleasure in the arts and sciences of knowing that will make them lifelong, adaptable learners. To achieve this, our schools will need the support of a social culture that values education and the various kinds of excellence education makes possible. At the heart of such a culture is a spirit that celebrates achievement and respects and rewards those who achieve. As one brief put it:

> *Individuals at many levels of ability, occupation and station must accept the need for high standards of performance and strive to achieve those standards. Our province needs excellent engineers, excellent construction workers, excellent mechanics, excellent politicians, excellent musicians, excellent athletes and excellent teachers as well as excellent students. We will get that attention to performance when we accept that most people regardless of who they are or what they do are capable of reaching some level of excellence, and their efforts to do so win them self respect and the respect of others.*
>
> *High performance is nourished by high expectations. Expect a lot and you increase the likelihood of high performance. This fact has broad implications. It means that we will have only the talents we encourage and the competence we want and expect. Our children will not seek excellence when significant adults fail to demonstrate excellence of mind and work.*

The Commission agrees. Perhaps the greatest obstacle to excellence in our schools is not a lack of resources, human or material; nor is it the curriculum; nor is it the organizational structure—though all of these could be improved. It is rather the lack of high expectations and their more tangible expression, high standards.

As it bears on education, a psychology of minimal expectations, to the extent it operates, will not serve well any of the groups that now comprise our system. Neither the gifted, the average, nor those with disabilities among our children are helped when we ask less of them than they can achieve. Nor are the teachers well served, nor those other professionals who assist, administer, guide, and support. This Commission believes that there is no necessary inconsistency between a humane and co-operative system of education and one with high expectations and correspondingly high standards. On the contrary, no system, whether social, economic, or educational which fails to set high standards for its people can be said to be truly humane, for in the achievement of goals (those we set for ourselves and those implicit in other people's expectations of us) is to be found a primary source of personal satisfaction and happiness.

Unless educational reform leads to higher and better-informed expectations on the part of all of the stakeholders of themselves and of each other, then it will fail. For what ails New Brunswick education is less material than spiritual. If it is true that "without a vision the people perish," then it is also true that without a mission the people languish. The goals of Equal Opportunity have been largely achieved, and, while there is no shortage of challenges to be addressed, there seems, within our educational system, and perhaps within our society, to be no compelling and invigorating quest. We believe that excellence, properly and unpretentiously understood, can and must become that quest. Not just or even mainly out of economic necessity, though that is part of it, but because only through such a quest can we rediscover both the sense and the reality of the kind of achievement that builds better lives and communities. Only thus can we customize accomplishment to the potential of the individual student. Only thus can we recover the sense of celebration that happens when human talent finds its full expression.

(IV) PAST REFORMS

Both in curriculum and organization, the most extensive changes made to the public school system during the past twenty-five have come about in order to reflect better New Brunswick's dual linguistic character. The commitment to homogeneous linguistic institutions, programs, and associations has meant, in practice, two separate teachers' associations (but one teachers' union), a Department of Education with separate French and English educational curricula and services, and dual provincial organizations of school trustees, superintendents, and parents.

Other recent significant changes include those made to strengthen the core curriculum, to re-organize the senior high-school program, to introduce computers into the classroom, and to implement stay-in-school strategies. Finally, in 1986 and 1991, changes were introduced which were aimed at making the system more truly inclusive by the integration of special-needs children into regular classrooms and by the establishment of a publicly-supported kindergarten program.

The system has had to adjust of late to so many changes that teachers are understandably wary and weary about the prospect of yet more change. On more than a few occasions, teachers told us that they wish those responsible would tell them what they were expected to do, then give them the resources and let them do it. In seeking to sharpen the focus of the curriculum and delimit the social responsibilities of schools, we have tried to respond to what is legitimate in that desire. We are persuaded, however, that there will be no cooling shade from the process of change, at least in the foreseeable future, and that teachers should be prepared to assume a larger, not a lesser, role in determining as well as managing the outcomes of that process.

(V) FUTURE PROSPECTS

What we have attempted to do in this report is not so much to prescribe a series of changes, though we have done some of that, as to create the conditions for sustained change, by indicating directions and by placing emphasis on results and outcomes. Some may wish we had been more prescriptive, more specific. To have done so would not only have taken us beyond the limits of our competence, but would have been inimical to our conviction that the expertise and commitment needed to get us to our goals are in the system itself and must be used and rewarded.

One of the general directions in which we point most strongly is towards shared authority, with teachers particularly being invited to assume a larger role in decisions that affect them and their students. We believe that much of the dispiritedness teachers are experiencing these days stems from the sense of helplessness they often feel to effect or influence change in the system themselves. While they have a strong union and wield considerable political clout, teachers are not generally regarded or treated, nor do they seem to regard themselves, as professionals. Indeed, to some extent their strong syndicalism has served to reinforce this image and self-image as an occupational group rather than a profession.

If this is to change for the better, all of the formal stakeholders in the system will have to modify their behaviour and exhibit a greater spirit of trust and partnership than has been true in the past. This includes the NBTF, school boards, the Department of Education, the Department of Finance, as well as principals and superintendents. It also includes the teachers themselves, as individual professionals, in what they choose to emphasize and in their openness to new challenges and increased responsibility.

The Commission is aware that there are financial implications to many of its recommendations and suggested directions. This is not to say that all our recommendations require additional budget allocations, or that implementation cannot begin for some without the provision of new resources immediately. We are, of course, cognizant of the current budgetary difficulties facing New Brunswick and have attempted to be reasonable and strategic in our call for new resources. In any event, we believe that many of the challenges facing education in New Brunswick require a greater investment of effort and imagination rather than money. Our approach has been to assess areas of critical concern and to recommend appropriate and feasible action. Some of these have resource implications; others require a redirection of current energies and resources.

It was not within the mandate of the Commission to make a systematic costing of our recommendations. The government will no doubt wish to do this as it determines which recommendations it will implement and what schedule it will follow. Governments elsewhere have responded in various ways to recent reports on educational reform. Some have set aside a global sum of money for the implementation of changes; others have tried to effect reform by re-allocating existing resources. The government of New Brunswick will have to set its own course in this matter, but we believe that, while much can be accomplished through re-allocation, it will not be possible to achieve the quantum step in the quality of education envisaged in this document without additional resources. We are encouraged by the decision of the government to redirect savings from school-district reorganization into enhancement of the public schools. While this will not be sufficient to implement the plan of action implicit in our recommendations, it is an important earnest of the government's intent and commitment. But, given the stringent state of public finance, it may not be possible for the government alone to do all we ask. Corporate and foundation support would not only be welcome, it would be consistent with the spirit of partnership which the Commission believes must be part of the new educational order.

(VI) POSTSCRIPT

In the course of our work we believe that we have gained a finer appreciation of the public school system in New Brunswick. From a distance, the image is one of uniformity, of sameness. Close-up, as we have seen it these past few months, there is remarkable variety in the way school districts and schools conduct their affairs, in what they choose to emphasize and in how they deploy their resources. There is as well, inherent in that diversity of approach, impressive ingenuity being exercised to tailor circumstance to local needs and priorities. There is too, and most encouragingly, considerably more innovation in teaching than is generally realized. Because we thought this worth celebrating, we have compiled a sample list of successful new school initiatives in Appendix F).

There is no doubt that in some classrooms and schools of this province the excellence we seek is already being achieved, give or take a glitch or two now and then. In a time when most of the news about education seems to centre on some inadequacy or another, this fact deserves to be better known. We are of the view that our public education system has come a long way in the past thirty years, that it has been responsive and sound, that at every level it has its fair share of dedicated and talented people. As a brief from a support-staff union local put it,

> *We are all part of excellence in education — from the bus driver who first sees the children in the morning to the secretary who is all things to all students (from friend to nurse to mother to administrator) to the teacher in the classroom to the principal.*

It is our hope that those who read our report will wish to count us in that company.

CHAPTER II:

Learning

Learning is not an abstract set of mental processes by which knowledge and skills are acquired. It involves all of the essential elements of human personality—intelligence, imagination, emotion, and desire. It is a profoundly, if not uniquely, human experience.

The capacity to learn, like the curiosity that activates it, is normally greatest in children. Anyone, therefore, who aspires to design an environment for the systematic development of that capacity must fix a steady eye on children and remind themselves that a primary responsibility is to do them no harm. Perhaps it was this that an experienced New Brunswick educator had in mind when he wrote in his brief:

> *In your report, tell New Brunswick that the first priority in our schools is to nurture the love of learning that children already have. That our first job is to keep children as thinkers and doers and that nothing should be done in the school or in the wider society that would damage their natural disposition.*

Throughout the period of consultation, the Commission sought out students whenever the opportunity arose, realizing that they were not likely to submit briefs or make presentations at public meetings. On a Saturday in March, we brought together in Fredericton for a day-long forum 60 senior and junior high school students from around the province, chosen in a way that favoured broad geographic, social, and academic representation. They conducted their own discussion groups, came to their own conclusions about issues the Commission had raised, and some they raised themselves, and presented their conclusions in plenary session.

We were impressed by their ability to organize their own discussion, agree on rapporteurs, debate points of disagreement, come to consensus on some complex issues, and explain their findings in assembly. They spoke well for the education system they represent, even if they did not always speak well of it.

The Student Forum did not of course represent a scientifically valid sampling of student opinion. It did, however, provide the Commission with a uniquely important angle of vision on our schools. It was a forceful reminder, if we needed one, that the people whose development educators seek to plan are also capable, when encouraged to do so, of reflecting insightfully upon how well the plan is working, and that the system might work better for everyone if students were given greater scope to indulge their natural disposition as "thinkers and doers."

(I) PURPOSES

The purposes of education may be and have been variously defined. The extensive literature on this subject appears, however, to distil into three broad categories of student development: individual self-fulfilment, social literacy, and economic self-sufficiency. While the emphasis among these categories shifts from time to time, all three have been and remain integral to the function of the school.

Individual self-fulfilment, or self-actualization, refers to the part played by the school in cultivating in students the ability to order and express thoughts and feelings, to explore their own unique interests and talents, to understand something of their own and other peoples' cultures, to master the basic literacies which give them access to knowledge by which they can continue personal development throughout life. This purpose is about self-discovery and self-identification; it is about the setting and pursuing of personal goals, the making of practical and moral decisions; it is about personal achievement and satisfaction. Such a purpose should be a constant reminder that at the centre of education is not a philosophy or a social being or an economic productivity unit, but a person with needs, aspirations, talents, and limitations which in the entire world are unique.

For as long as there have been schools, another of their primary purposes has been socialization. While families and religious institutions have socialized children to their own norms and objectives, it has been left to schools to introduce students to the provenance, organization, and values of the larger society.

This is of cardinal importance in a liberal democracy. The health of our political system depends not only upon responsible and effective leaders but also upon informed and active citizens. Socialization, however, is much more than political awareness. At root, it is helping students by precept and practice to develop a social conscience, to assume responsibility not only for their own affairs but for the well-being of others.

Someone once defined the end of education as being to make people privately happy and publicly useful. In its rough-hewn way it is not a bad definition. To be both happy and useful in our own or any other modern society people need to work. Especially in the minds of students and their parents, school has always been viewed as a gateway to economic opportunity. Only recently, however, has it been regarded as a gateway to economic survival. With the dramatic decline in employment in our province's and nation's resource-based export industries, and the dramatic growth in industries requiring highly-skilled and well-educated workers, the link between our educational institutions and economic success, both individual and collective, has received renewed emphasis.

Some object to this emphasis as a distortion of the role of the schools. The Commission holds a different view. We believe that the relationship with work is a traditional function of the school which has not been well discharged of late in Canada, or in North America for that matter. The educational reforms of the sixties, instituted in a time of considerable social affluence, focussed on the purposes of individual fulfilment and social equity. In the context of the times this made sense. The context, however has changed. The traditional industrial basis of our prosperity is threatened, not by any one country or circumstance, but by a changing world economic order and our own declining productivity. In consequence, employment opportunities for those without a sound education are both less numerous and less secure. At such a time it is essential, this Commission believes, to stress the connection between educational and economic achievement, both for individuals and for our society.

Fortunately, this can be done without de-emphasizing the other traditional purposes of schooling. Such is the knowledge-intensive nature of the new economies that, for the most part, they require and reward the same kinds of knowledge, skill, and behaviour which are conducive to personal fulfilment and social literacy. There is no reason to abandon, or even compromise, a broad-based liberal education in pursuit of more vocational or technological training. On the contrary, what is needed is a rediscovery and a re-affirmation of the essence, rigour, and goals of a liberal education: to equip students with enough fundamental knowledge and skills to think for themselves, to be flexible, adaptable, resourceful, inventive, and responsible. As one business person has put it:

> *A liberal education not only imparts the great lessons of history, citizenship, and science, it teaches people to think, to solve problems, to take risks. A liberal education prepares the individual to think independently, to step back from problems and the crowd, to be an entrepreneur and innovator.*

What the Commission is advocating throughout this report is not less liberal education but more and better. We believe that all the purposes of education would be better served were this to come to pass.

A liberal education should posit liberal objectives for itself, objectives that respect the traditional as well as the contemporary purposes of education, objectives such as the following:

- To cultivate the minds of students and thereby facilitate academic achievement.
- To lay a solid foundation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and habits necessary for participatory citizenship and productive employment.
- To foster a sense of self-esteem and the confidence to aspire to personal excellence.
- To encourage avocational interests, achievement, and satisfaction.
- To provide a safe, stimulating, and non-discriminatory physical and social environment for all students.
- To motivate and equip students to become lifelong learners.

These are not put forward prescriptively, but as illustrative of the breadth and depth of purpose that we feel are appropriate for a public educational system.

A recent effort to define the broad aims of school which also illustrates the range of skills and knowledge envisaged by this Commission is that of the Australian Curriculum Development Centre. The following "aims of education for Australian schools" were designed to undergird a national core curriculum and, through that curriculum, to be translated into more specific learning objectives.

> *Communication in spoken and written language*
>
> *Number skills, mathematical reasoning and spatial relationships*
>
> *Scientific processes and their applications*
>
> *Logical enquiry and analysis*
>
> *Creative, imaginative and intuitive ways of thinking/experiencing*
>
> *The capacity to use knowledge symbols, processes and skills*
>
> *Perception, expression and appreciation through the arts and crafts*
>
> *Manual and physical skills*
>
> *The personal articulation of experience and thinking into value and belief systems*

The challenge for curriculum development is to identify the knowledge and skills necessary to the mastery of each of these aims, and then to organize and integrate the materials and activities in light of students' developmental needs and capacities. A degree of proficiency should thus be established for each major stage of learning. The challenge for the classroom teacher is to use materials and activities in ways that engage, stretch, and reward individual students.

At present, New Brunswick has no single list or recent statement of aims and objectives for its school system. We believe that one is needed, within which individual schools might establish their own statements of purpose, attempting to achieve all of the provincial aims but identifying also some which reflect local circumstances or particular strengths. There is no good reason, or even possibility, that all schools should be the same. While a framework of objectives should be developed, institutional individuality should be encouraged.

> **1. The Commission recommends therefore that, after consultation with students, teachers, trustees, parents, and other interested parties, the Department of Education establish a set of aims for New Brunswick schools, and further that, within the context and spirit of those aims, each school create its own set of aims or statement of purpose.**

The present would seem an ideal time for such an exercise. Interest in educational issues is very high both within and outside the schools. The Commission was impressed with the quality of the thinking that informed many of the briefs and oral presentations made to it. Time and again we heard the need expressed for a more clearly-defined mandate for the schools. It is a mandate which cannot be vouchsafed by a commission; it should be formulated by the Department of Education after appropriate consultation.

(II) OUTCOMES AND MEASUREMENT

> *Measurement and evaluation of learning is, for us, the first stage to consider in the pursuit of excellence. (Brief from les Comités de parents du Nouveau-Brunswick)*

It is important, however, that this process not stop with the formulation of a set of objectives for the school system. Equally necessary to the improvement sought is the formulation of statements about the intellectual and technical competencies expected of students at various stages. Students, teachers, parents, trustees, and the Department all have legitimate reasons to know what is being attempted and when it has been achieved. It is not unreasonable to ask, for example, what a child should know and be able to do by the end of grade 6. What level of proficiency in reading, writing, and numbers is it reasonable to assume has been mastered? What kinds of literature have been read and understood? What kind of exercises in the gathering and organizing of information can be conducted? What evidence of scientific reasoning can be expected? It would be unreasonable to conclude that failure to know or do what was expected was the sole responsibility of the teacher or the school. Many factors beyond the classroom complicate the learning process and make facile measurement of progress dangerous. These, however, should not be used to avoid setting reasonable bench-marks, or standards, of achievement for the major stages of educational development. To the greatest extent possible, standards should be standard; that is to say, not arbitrary, but based on our best knowledge and judgment of what is worth knowing and knowing how to do.

A corollary to the setting of educational outcomes is to design reliable ways of measuring progress. Hardly anyone quarrels with the need for assessment. Around how assessment should occur, however, there swirls a sandstorm of controversy. In advocating that greater emphasis be put on the setting of standards and the measurement of progress towards their achievement, the Commission is conscious that teachers have been somewhat apprehensive about the prospect of external evaluation and monitoring of student progress. As represented by their associations, however, teachers have supported external testing where the results are used by the classroom teacher for diagnostic and remedial purposes. No more than teachers do we wish to see an educational system that is driven by standardized tests, a system that gives excessive weight to "one right answer" and encourages teachers to teach to that end, a system that fails to foster creativity or the spirit of scientific discovery, where the best learning often results from wrong answers and failed experiments. We too want students who are encouraged and trained to apply knowledge, not regurgitate it.

The Commission accepts—indeed, rejoices—that there are many kinds of intelligence, some of which cannot be accurately measured with the instruments we now have. We acknowledge that there are skills and knowledge derived from these not-easily-measured intelligences which the schools should also nurture: a strong social conscience, sound personal values, the confidence and ability to meet people and engage their interest or their friendship, the independence of mind and character to resist the crowd rather than compromise important principles, sound personal health and fitness habits, the cultivation of an avocational interest or talent, the courage not to be defeated by a social or personal disadvantage. For all these aspects of human character and development the schools must provide opportunity, encouragement, and recognition of excellence when it is achieved. Too narrow a curriculum or too great a reliance on standardized measurement will militate against this.

That said, it still seems to us that it would be illogical and unwise to argue that we should not measure better the things we can because there are some things we cannot measure well. Canada is one of only two (the other being the United States) developed countries in the world which do not have an externally-graded competency examination system keyed to secondary school curriculum. One country uses multiple-choice tests; the others use extended-answer examinations, which include essay-writing and the demonstration of method used to arrive at results in mathematics. The examinations are set by national or regional boards, drawing on the expertise of teachers, and are marked by panels of teachers.

External examinations, though complex and time-consuming to develop and administer, have a number of advantages which, in the estimation of the countries involved, more than justify them. In the first place, they provide a more objective and consistent standard against which to assess student performance than does individual teacher evaluation. This is a matter of some utility and importance to parents, employers, and post-secondary institutions who must make decisions on the basis of students' grades.

External examinations help teachers by providing a check against their own judgment of students' work. That judgment, based as it is upon observation over time and of a wide range of student performance and behaviour, should continue to be the most important part of assessment. A good external examination system, however, can only benefit the formation and exercise of the teacher's judgment.

At present, teachers have a most difficult role to play. They are expected to be both mentor and judge to students. At the elementary school level this may not pose great problems; young children readily accept the authority of adults. Such is not the case with young adults, for whom relationships with authority figures are more complex. By being the sole arbiters of students' work, teachers risk strained relations with both the students and their parents. To avoid this, teachers sometimes engage in extravagant praise of mediocre work. Either way, it is difficult for all but the most skilled teachers to establish the kind of mentoring relationship which lies at the heart of good teaching. Having an external standard against which teachers and students together compete can create the kind of positive relationship that too often is limited to sports coaches, drama teachers, band conductors, and Scout or Guide leaders, all of whom work with students to meet a challenge set by others.

It was a consideration such as this which prompted the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland in 1990 to oppose moving away from the externally-graded examinations in that country:

> *The introduction of school-based assessment by the pupil's own teacher for certification purposes would undermine . . . the pastoral contribution of teachers in relation to pupils . . . and the perception of teachers as an advocate in terms of nationally certified examinations rather than as judge.*
>
> *This would automatically result in a distancing between the teacher, the pupil, and the parent. It also opens the door to possible distortion of results in response to either parental pressure or pressure emanating from competition among local schools for pupils.*

2. We recommend that the province of New Brunswick undertake, in a serious and comprehensive way, to set standards and measure results in its school system. This means specifying clearly what students are expected to know and be able to do at various stages of their schooling, in at least the core curriculum. It means implementing broad-range performance-based tests at key intervals of the educational process. It also means assisting teachers to improve their own evaluation of students and to use both school-based and external results to help remediate the specific learning needs of students.

This last aspect is of particular importance. Teachers, by their own reckoning, are not being well prepared for the difficult practice of student assessment. As we do in many places in this report, we come back here to the need for better teacher training, both pre-service and in-service. If teachers are to remain the principal arbiters of academic performance by students, as the Commission believes they should, then they must be given more help in this demanding area. Teachers must also be involved in a major way in the design of any new provincial examinations.

We believe that an effective evaluation and monitoring system is essential to a strong curriculum and to excellence in education. Competition, unless it is a zero-sum game, as it is when students are measured against their classmates on a Bell curve, can generate excitement and greater effort. Competing against high but reasonable provincial standards could help teachers and students alike to find a common cause so conspicuously absent at present from many classrooms.

As noted in Issues Paper I, New Brunswick is an active participant in the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) of the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada(CMEC). This initiative is designed to assess how well thirteen- and sixteen-year-old students are doing in reading, writing, and mathematics and to what extent achievement increases between thirteen and sixteen. The administration of the first assessments is scheduled for May 1993, with a report of results to be publicly issued in October 1993. Not all thirteen- and sixteen-year-olds will be tested in each province. Therefore, while the sample used will give a high level of confidence at the provincial level, results will not be valid below there. It is the Commission's view that the SAIPs will be a valuable tool in taking a measure of the performance of New Brunswick schools compared to those in other provinces in the areas tested. They cannot, however, fill the need for universal assessment of New Brunswick students.

The Commission has received many comments from teachers, parents, and students on the Provincial Achievement Tests/examens provinciaux now given in high school. Policies for administration of these tests and for the use of the tests results have been developed independently by the anglophone and francophone sectors and are strikingly different. There is nothing improper or undesirable in principle about the divisions developing different policies or practices. Indeed, the Commission believes that the entire system often benefits from the different approaches that are taken to important issues. In the case of the provincial examinations, however, we believe that a more rigorous approach on the part of the anglophone division is desirable.

As things stand, the PAE results in English and mathematics are not counted towards the student's final grades, while for francophone students, who write *examens provinciaux* in more subjects, marks are worth 40 per cent of their total in the courses concerned. Not surprisingly, the *examens provinciaux* seem to be taken seriously in francophone schools, while for many anglophone students, as we were told on a number of occasions, the PAEs are a "joke" and represent little more than a couple of days off school when they are being written.

It seems obvious that the PAEs should either be accorded some importance in the process of evaluation or they should be dropped. Consistent with our view that there needs to be more not less provincial testing,

3. we would recommend that the PAEs be made mandatory and include at least mathematics, sciences, language arts, and second language subjects, and represent at least 30 per cent of the student's final mark.

(III) THE SOCIAL PURPOSES OF SCHOOLS

In speaking of educational purposes and how they are best attained, one must take into account the social context of our schools. In the report of the British Columbia Royal Commission on Education (1988), Mr. Justice Barry Sullivan chose an apt metaphor to depict the relationship between schools and the society they serve.

> *The school is, in many ways, a reflecting pool. It mirrors, with relatively little distortion, the expectations, values, and purposes we expect to see embodied in its programs and operations. If its objectives are diffuse, it is because ours are too; if its clientele is heterogeneous in nature, it is because we, too, are a diverse society; if it seeks social justice and equity, it is because we, as a province, hold such values; if it is confused at times by the whirlwind of new knowledge and technological advancement that sweeps around it, it is because we, too, have difficulty adjusting to change.*

Schools have always been more than educational institutions, if by education one understands the pursuit of such purposes as are discussed above. Social changes in the past generation, especially those associated with the changing role of the family, have increased pressure on schools to accept more residual, or custodial, responsibilities. The reason for this is obvious: schools afford the most comprehensive and systematic contact with the young and thus are convenient for the delivery of various programs designed to relieve their social conditions or enhance their social development. For teachers, many of whom have chosen teaching because of the empathy they feel for children, it is very hard to resist becoming involved in services intended to counter impediments to learning. Nevertheless, teachers often feel burdened and deflected by such involvements.

Many believe that the expansion in the custodial responsibilities of the school in recent years has come at the expense of the school's more traditional educational objectives. The extra-educational role often includes health services, personal development, recreation, and career counselling, as well as programmed activities to discourage substance abuse, cultural or racial prejudice, and unsafe sex. At the same time, schools are pressured to provide more challenging programs for the intellectually gifted students and better care and stimulation for those with disabilities.

Inasmuch as schools are reflecting pools for society, it is not surprising that they should be expected to become engaged with the prevailing social challenges and anxieties of the day. The issue, however, is one of priority-setting. Schools do not have the resources, nor educators the professional competence, to develop and implement costly ancillary programs. The Commission favours a delimiting of the social responsibilities of the schools in order to increase emphasis on their central educational mission. This is not to say that we see a lesser role for the schools as a locus for the co-ordination and delivery of support services. On the contrary, as we propose in Chapter V, we see coalitions of support agencies forming around our schools to eliminate where possible, and reduce where not, the stumbling blocks to learning. What we do envisage is a school system where educational goals and pursuits predominate, and where there is enough and better-orchestrated parental, community, and government support for the ancillary programs so that educators are left free to do what they do best, educate.

(IV) THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In recent years the school population in New Brunswick has changed considerably. A policy designed to increase student retention, the inclusion in regular classrooms of children with special physical or mental disabilities, the introduction of successful stay-in-school programs, and a more flexible approach in dealing with students who present discipline problems has meant a more inclusive student body, more reflective of the population in our society. Many who previously would not have been in school or who would have dropped out are now part of the mainstream. This, in the opinion of the Commission, represents a very laudable achievement, consonant with the ideal of a just and humane society, as well as with the more pragmatic objective of preparing all our children to live productive lives, and reflects well on the teachers and the educational leadership in our province. While modifications of the methods used to achieve these ends will be in order from time to time, the principles of inclusiveness and integration should not be compromised.

Special Needs Children

A small number of students require special assistance to enable them to develop their talents. In some cases this may mean that supplementary programs of instruction are required since the regular classroom program will not suffice to ameliorate or correct the impediments to learning. Teachers who have responsibilities for special needs children will themselves need special assistance if they are to cope effectively. Paraprofessional aides, volunteers, specialized teaching materials, and student-tutors are the kinds of assistance which have proved helpful and which need to be put at the disposal of teachers. If they are not, it will be the burden of integration rather than its achievements which will characterize its assessment among educators.

The Commission heard much of that burden, of the fact that the lack of adequate resources puts in jeopardy the goals of integration, the quality of instruction in the classroom, and the morale of teachers. We were told that the policy of integration was not well thought through, was not properly prepared for, and that the promised resources have not been delivered. We heard few complaints about the principle itself. We believe there should be no turning back; an important step has been taken, and we must now ensure that it is well taken. Integration is not an end in itself. It is the means by which students with disabilities are treated in such a way that they can maximize their learning potential. This must and can be done without derogating from the opportunity afforded other students to realize their learning potential.

4. We recommend therefore that the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Education reaffirm their long-term commitment to the implementation of integration by ensuring that services for students with special needs are made available on a reasonable and equitable basis across the province.

Children with Learning Disabilities

There is another group of children whose disabilities are less visible; they are those with average or higher-than-average intelligence whose mastery of one or more of the foundation skills of learning is impeded by a neurological dysfunction. Because the dysfunction is invisible, it frequently goes undetected, and failure to learn is misattributed to other causes.

The Department of Education in co-operation with the school districts initiated services for students with learning disabilities in 1976 under the Comprehensive Plan for Services to Learning Disabled Pupils. In the next five years, services designed to identify learning disabled students and remediate their difficulties were implemented in all districts throughout the province. Under the Comprehensive Plan, districts were able to provide special education co-ordination, psychological services, speech therapy, special planning and instruction.

Fifteen years later, we are at least more aware of the social and emotional challenges learning-disabled students face. Regrettably, many such students by the time they reach adolescence have developed discipline or behavioral problems, often contributed to by the difficulties they encounter in learning.

Educators and parents have come to realize that special services will be required throughout the learning-disabled student's entire educational career. Thus, a long-term commitment by the educational system is essential. It is generally agreed that there are four major areas that will require a concerted and co-operative long-term effort by teachers, parents, and the school system: teacher training, curriculum adaptation, technologically-assisted learning, and social development.

Although educators are more aware of learning disabilities these days, it would appear that some learning-disabled students are still struggling, drifting, or slipping through the system undetected, or not identified until the secondary level. It is clear that teachers continue to have need of knowledge in the various kinds of learning disabilities and how to recognize and assist students who have them.

Teachers also require assistance in how to address the learning styles of such students. Because learning-disabled students are a very heterogeneous group, familiarity with a variety of learning styles, skills, and strategies appropriate to effective instruction is important. Teachers in all subject areas and at all grade levels should receive the pre-service or in-service training necessary to assist them in the curriculum adaptation that may be necessary to help the learning-disabled student become successful academically and socially.

Computer-assisted learning has proven to be a key to success for many learning-disabled students with difficulties in writing. For students with fine-motor problems or difficulties with composition, computers have been particularly helpful.

Learning-disabled students with perceptual difficulties may not read body language or hear the nuances of our spoken language. As a result, they can sometimes present discipline or behaviour problems simply because they have misread or misperceived a situation. Just as these students can be taught reading, mathematics, and other subjects, so they can be taught appropriate social skills. For many of them, social- or interpersonal-skills instruction may prove to be as important as reading and mathematics.

The Commission heard often that the amelioration of many of the learning problems students face was beyond the professional competence of teachers. There appears to be a strong consensus among educators that it is desirable to focus resources on the early assessment of such problems so that intervention strategies can be implemented when the chances of remediation are greatest. In light of the significantly greater costs of detection and remediation of learning difficulties later on in a student's career, the Commission is persuaded by the logic of this consensus.

5. We therefore recommend that additional resources in such areas as guidance and counselling, resource and methods teaching, child psychology, and speech pathology be directed towards elementary school students.

Children with Special Gifts or Talents

As with other special-needs students, providing programs and services to the gifted and talented presents a special challenge to teachers, schools, families, and communities. It is a challenge, however, that an inclusive education system that seeks to develop academic potential in all its students cannot neglect.

Gifted students require the same essential components of programming as other students. They need to develop socially and emotionally by interacting and maturing with their age peers. They do, however, require curricular and instructional enhancement that varies the breadth, depth, tempo, and nature of regular programs of instruction. Strategies for adapting curriculum and instructional delivery for gifted students must take into account these special requirements. In addition, it is important that strategies address content, learning processes, creative- and critical-thinking skills, skills in research, and provisions for student-developed products. A combination of curriculum enrichment and practical experience focussing on real- life issues will assist students to realize their often immense potential.

To ensure that the needs of the gifted and talented are conscientiously addressed, consideration should be given to the following recommendations.

6. Consistent with the Department of Education's directions, procedures should be established for use by districts to provide for enrichment activities for gifted and talented students; in addition, more formal ways of recognizing special talents and achievements should be considered.

The Department should continue to initiate and assist in the development of teacher-training courses by universities in New Brunswick, with an aim to heightening awareness and developing teaching strategies and capabilities to deal effectively with gifted and talented students.

Children and Poverty

In an ideal world, a child would be born into a secure, caring, and stimulating family, and would enter school hale and hearty and ready to learn. The family would maintain a keen and supportive interest in the child's learning, working with teachers to ensure that academic and social goals were met and that confidence and self-esteem grew with each new achievement. As childhood gave way to youth, there would be opportunities for the exercise of independent judgment about values, career-direction, lifestyles—all within a nurturing family, school, and community.

In the less-than-ideal world in which many children live, poverty, abuse, and deprivation too frequently define the environment. For those children the path to school is an ambiguous one. Early on, it invites them into a world that is clean, attractive, stimulating, and secure. As time passes, and social distinctions and academic achievement levels widen, the dream world becomes for many its own kind of nightmare.

In Canada, more than one million children live in poverty. Statistics show that poverty, traditionally more prevalent among the elderly, has shifted its focus towards younger families with children, and is concentrated most heavily in single-parent families headed by women. Children under the age of 18 make up the largest single group of people living in low-income families. It is estimated that in New Brunswick approximately 38,000 children are living in poverty. Of these, 28,000 are recipients of social assistance.

An endemic feature of poverty is poor housing. The 1987 New Brunswick Housing "Needs Study" indicated that at least 64,000 children from birth to 15 years of age lived in some form of inadequate housing. Housing need was defined according to adequacy, affordability, and suitability. These findings were supported by the Report of the Minister's Task Force on Housing, "Home Sweet Home." It reported that there were at least "30,000 poor New Brunswick families who were not receiving financial assistance with housing, resulting in a negative impact on health conditions, human dignity and on social and economic functioning." Many people are forced to spend 60-70 per cent of their total monthly income on rent, power, and utilities; the recommended maximum figure is 30 per cent.

While the Province has initiated significant new programs and increased low income housing availability in the intervening years, it is clear that there remain large numbers of children whose physical home environment is not conducive to the development of the self-esteem and social confidence which facilitate learning. This does not mean that some families and children will not rise above their impoverishment; the odds, however, are strongly against their doing so.

As depressing as the statistics on child poverty are, those on physical and sexual abuse and neglect are even more so. The child protection service currently handles approximately 6,500 reported cases a year, which represents nearly one child in every classroom, or almost the equivalent of the number of teachers in our schools.

Even more than inadequate housing, poor nutrition affects not only the long-term development of children but their everyday performance as well. At the very earliest stages, stress, low birth weight, physical and mental handicaps, dental problems, vitamin deficiencies, lack of normal growth are some of the consequences of poor nutrition of expectant mothers. At a later stage, teachers report that hungry children are less physically active, less attentive, less independent, less curious, more anxious, less responsive socially, more irritable and tired. These characteristics result in children with poor reading, verbal, and motor skills. It goes without saying that children who have trouble paying attention and concentrating quickly, and sometimes irremediably, fall behind their classmates. Not surprisingly, therefore, the drop-out rate for poor children is considerably higher than for others.

Equality of opportunity has long been an expressed goal of education. School laws in every province address this issue. The debate about education's ability to promote equality of outcome must be more seriously and urgently joined. If it is not, "excellence in education" will have a hollow and a mocking ring.

The Canadian Teachers Federation 1989 report on children, school, and poverty noted that

> *while schools can and should contribute towards ensuring equality of educational access and attainment, they are simply incapable of ensuring equality of outcome. School systems will fight an uphill battle in trying to meet the educational needs of poor children if they are left alone in their efforts.*

The Commission agrees. Provincial strategies in health, mental health, and community services are needed to assist the educational system and the children in need of intervention, and those strategies should focus most particularly on children before they enter school and during the early years. For it is clear that the longer intervention is delayed the more formidable and costly become attempts at remediation.

If we accept as a basic principle that all children should begin their school career "ready to learn," then it follows that various social benefices are required along the path to the school door.

7.a) The Commission recommends that consideration be given to ensuring that the most vulnerable of expectant mothers—those who are young, poor, and single—have access to good pre-natal care and nutrition;

b) nutrition programs be made available to children in need as they move through pre-school programs and into the school system;

c) consideration be given to developing and/or enhancing screening mechanisms for the identification and referral of children-at-risk from birth to kindergarten entrance, whose development is delayed as a result of physical or intellectual disabilities or because of socioeconomic deprivation;

d) current early intervention approaches for children-at-risk be broadened and strengthened. This might include giving consideration to integrating early intervention and day-care programs, to ensure that all children enter kindergarten "ready to learn."

Retention

In Issues Paper I we discussed at some length the matter of students at greatest risk of dropping out of school before graduation. We reviewed recent strategies which have been adopted here in New Brunswick to retain students capable of getting a high school diploma but who, for various reasons, do not find school stimulating or relevant enough to want to stay. We even suggested that a school-completion rate of 90% might be set as a goal for the system.

Throughout our consultations we have been impressed by the province-wide commitment to the philosophy of keeping the number of dropouts to a minimum. That it seems New Brunswick has now the highest retention rate in Canada is no longer surprising to the Commission. The results which have been achieved over the past several years reflect both the priority which the New Brunswick and Canadian governments have placed on stay-in-school incentive programs, and the many fine efforts of schools and districts to make these programs effective. The Commission is anxious that these initiatives continue to receive government support, and we have made a specific recommendation to this effect in chapter 5. We remain convinced that, in the articulation of educational goals for the province and the districts, it is important that a high retention rate should feature prominently.

Setting targets for retention, and mounting stay-in-school programs, will not of course by themselves guarantee the desired results. The challenge, as we have tried to address it, is to make more challenging, stimulating, and relevant all aspects of school. In that sense, almost everything we recommend in this report is intended to increase retention by enhancing the quality, value, and pleasure inherent in education.

Discipline

Classroom management has always been a primary concern for teachers. While the classroom need not be what it too often has been, a regimented and repressive environment, it must be, in fairness to all the students and the process of learning, a controlled environment. The way in which that control is exercised by teachers goes to the heart of the craft of teaching, and is often the principal determinant of the measure of satisfaction teachers experience in their work.

It would seem that teacher anxiety on the issue of classroom management has become more acute in recent years. The Commission heard many impassioned pleas from teachers for help in dealing with egregiously disruptive behaviour by a relatively small percentage of the student population. In making their appeal for assistance, teachers were careful to distinguish between the normal propensity of most children to "act up" occasionally, and the more disturbing trend among a few towards delinquent behaviour. The former is an occupational hazard which most teachers learn to deal with without resorting to repressive measures; the latter disrupts teaching and learning alike and can destroy the morale of the teacher and the class.

Based on the representations made to the Commission, one would conclude that this more disruptive behaviour is (a) more common in urban than in rural or suburban schools; (b) a more serious problem at the junior high than the senior high school level; (c) related to a weakening of the traditional structure of the family and to a general decline in society in the deference accorded to authority; and (d) cannot adequately be addressed by teachers and principals alone, given the range of correctional options available and the fact that school-based decisions on discipline are frequently not supported by school boards.

As the literature on this issue emphasizes, and as some teachers told us, the best general antidote to unruly behaviour is effective teaching—not just for the interest it elicits from the potentially recalcitrant student, but because of the peer pressure to conform when the rest of the class is engaged in learning. Not all teachers, including some very competent ones, are so gifted; not every student can be thus co-opted even if they were. The Commission acknowledges that there are circumstances where extraordinary measures will need to be taken.

We were encouraged to hear that some progress has been made in addressing this difficult matter. Many, perhaps most, school districts have set up school advisory committees, with community, parent, and trustee, as well as teacher and student representation, to devise discipline policy and strategies and to monitor results. Such measures as in-school suspension and attention rooms where disruptive students can get help with their school work seem to have been as effective as they are progressive.

There remains, however, the persistent charge that "some kids are out of control," do not respond to such correctional actions, and pose a threat to the welfare and sometimes the health of their teachers and peers. What extraordinary discretionary authority, if any, ought to be granted to the schools to deal with such circumstances? When should the right to expel be invoked? Should there be in New Brunswick a centre or centres where students who severely and persistently disrupt might be referred for help?

Like a number of other social-responsibility issues which confront the schools, this one cannot be resolved by educators alone. Community help is essential. There is as well, we believe, need for a provincial initiative.

8. We would recommend, consistent with our approach to several other extra-educational issues, that an interdepartmental committee of government be struck, with representation from Education, Health and Community Services, and the Solicitor General, to draw up a protocol for signature by the respective ministers detailing the responsibilities to be assumed and the resources to be provided by each in dealing with egregiously disruptive behaviour.

In the meantime, we believe it is essential that school boards, superintendents, principals, and teachers should collaborate closely on the rules, roles, rights, and responsibilities that will apply in dealing with discipline questions. At present, there is a feeling on the part of some teachers and principals that they are not being supported by their superintendents and boards. We cannot judge the extent to which this feeling is justified, but we believe that, in this area, as in some others we identify in this report, it is desirable that as much professional discretion as carefully-drawn policy will allow should rest with the principal and teachers.

It is also essential that parents assume, and be urged and encouraged to assume, their share of responsibility for the behaviour of their children. It is not acceptable for parents to say to teachers, as some are reported to have done, that their children's in-school behaviour is entirely a matter for the school to control.

(v) THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Bliss Carman once said:

> *We are moulded by the conditions and surroundings in which we live; but we too often forget that the environment is largely what we make it.*

The 414 public schools in New Brunswick range in age from the very old (1886) to the very new (1992) and in enrolment from the very small (10 pupils) to the very large (nearly 3000). Several contain little more than a couple of traditional classrooms; a few include vocational shops, gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, library, computing centre, language and science laboratories, swimming pool, sports field, playground, teacher lounge, guidance suite, child-care centre, and in one case a student-operated restaurant. The rest fall somewhere in-between.

There are schools that can accommodate only kindergarten and primary grade children; others include only students enrolled in grades 10 to 12; still others include almost every combination of three or more grades from K to 12. To break down New Brunswick schools into primary, elementary, junior high, and senior high is to oversimplify the variety of grade configurations that exist.

Seventy-three per cent of the schools now in use are thirty years old or more. A number of our schools rely on portable classrooms for additional space. In 1992 some 440 portables are in use, including 330 for classrooms and 110 for academic-support and administration purposes. It is true, however, that the number of portables has been reduced over the past ten years and that further reductions are projected in the current school construction program.

The last major building boom occurred during the 1960s when 103 schools were opened, more than were built in the following two decades combined. With age comes inevitable deterioration of roofs, furnaces, electrical wiring, ventilation systems, plumbing, and floors. A significant number of our schools have reached an age where major repairs and maintenance are required. If they are to be maintained as suitable and safe environments for students and teachers, a much greater amount of money will have to be found for routine maintenance and essential renovation.

The 1991-92 government budget allocation for repairs and renovations was approximately 1 per cent of the replacement value of the schools, compared to the 4 per cent that is the recommended standard. A sizable portion of that 1 per cent was required to make modifications that would allow the introduction of the public kindergarten program in the fall of 1991.

But of course there is much more to a proper educational environment than leak-free roofs, safe stairwells, fuel-efficient furnaces, and proper air quality, important though these are. Other desirable qualities include proper accessibility for the disabled; appropriate landscaping; pleasing use of colour—on walls, in drapes, carpets, and graphics; the paving and curbing of driveways; well-appointed bus drop-off stations; creative development of playgrounds and sportsfields; adequate artificial and natural illumination; and space for the display of student project work. All these contribute to the attractiveness and quality of the school environment, as does everything subsumed under custodial care and day-to-day maintenance. Too often, in the discourse about the pursuit of excellence in education, we lose sight of some of the physical and practical aspects which affect so directly the perception and attitude of students towards school.

It is acknowledged that differences exist and will continue to do so in the design, size, and physical properties of schools. We would suggest, however, that every school should be safe, healthful, well-maintained, and, to the greatest extent possible, attractive and properly equipped. To this end, it is recommended that

9. a) emphasis in government capital funding of schools be shifted from new construction to a greater investment in the maintenance and upgrading of existing schools;

b) as enrolments continue to decline, the Department of Education eliminate portable classrooms, many of which do not constitute a suitable environment for teaching and learning;

c) teacher education programs, both pre- and in-service, include modules that will equip and encourage teachers to use available resources to improve the aesthetic qualities of their classrooms and the common areas inside and outside school buildings.

(VI) SCHOOL LIBRARIES

In the literature of educational reform, little attention has been paid to libraries and their role in information literacy. It can scarcely be doubted, however, that increasingly central to educational competence is the ability to find, assess, and use information effectively. While one may be tempted at times to ask, with T. S. Eliot,

> *Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?*
>
> *Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?*

it remains true that information literacy is an intellectual survival skill in an information age. It is also the basis for lifelong learning.

Libraries, in addition to their traditional role of providing a repository of reading materials, have a pre-eminent part to play in making students information-literate and in fostering resource-based learning in schools. As is already happening in some school districts, librarians need to work closely with classroom teachers to familiarize them with the major information sources, such as databases, learning networks, reference materials, textbooks, journals, newspapers, and magazines. Teachers in turn need to treat the school library and, where available, public libraries, as an extension of their classroom. The object of resource-based learning is to shift some of the emphasis in teaching away from the lecture method and textbooks to more independent, self-directed inquiry, thus giving the student more involvement in the process. Since 1977, the New Brunswick school system has demonstrated gradual but steady improvement in the management of library and media resources. Most recently the introduction of automated resource-management systems has enhanced efficiency, and this initiative should be continued. The 1980s witnessed the revitalization and reconstruction of the Department's audio-visual services, and this facility now provides very efficient delivery of curricula-relevant material to the schools.

The Commissioners note with approval the initiatives taken by the Maritime Provinces Education Foundation, both in the co-operative development of regional resources and in the inception of facilities, such as the regional French media centre and the regional application of the New Brunswick designed NewBed, to enhance communication and resource-sharing.

Less positive is the evidence that all of the resources are being used to their maximum potential in instruction and learning. This is regrettable because the availability of these resources clearly affords unique opportunities to further both verbal and visual literacy, to promote critical discernment and thinking, and to move students towards independent resourcefulness which will become a lifelong asset. Above all, perhaps, the concept of resource-based learning affords an opportunity for teachers to involve students and make them responsible for their own learning.

The Commission notes that some districts and schools have taken promising initiatives to ensure, through in-service strategies and instructional approaches, that these objectives may be more fully realized. We are aware of efforts which are being made in the Department of Education to incorporate resource-based strategies into curriculum documentation and in-service programs, and urge that these initiatives continue. We would also encourage faculties of education to ensure that pre-service teacher training pays due attention to these concepts and instructional techniques, both in theory and in practice.

The Commission received several briefs from public library sources and wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution which these institutions make both to formal education and continuing adult personal education. We commend the productive co-operation in some areas between the public library and the schools. While we believe that, because of the diversity of their clientele and modes of operation, the distinct identities of the two institutions must be respected, we believe that means to strengthen such co-operation should be assiduously sought, especially in the areas of resource-management and resource-sharing.

Libraries have the paradoxical potential of being either highly introverted and insular or models of out-reach and communication. It is clear which propensity should prevail.

CHAPTER III:

Teaching, Teachers, and Training

Throughout its work the Commission has been mindful of what Michael Fullan and Andy Hargreaves have said:

> *Education reform has failed time and time again. We believe this is because reform has either ignored teachers or oversimplified what teaching is about. Reform has failed because the focus has not been on the total school and the total teacher as these relate to the learning of students. There are no quick fixes, but there are quick failures.*

We have therefore listened carefully to what teachers and others have told us about teaching and the profession today. Unpersuaded that there is a crisis in teaching, as some have claimed, we have not gone in search of some magic elixir. Instead, and more modestly, in our recommendations we have tried to identify ways by which the selection, preparation, support, recognition, and performance of teachers could be improved. We remain convinced of what we said in our issues paper, that "nothing matters so much to the success of an educational enterprise as well-selected, well-trained, well-motivated, well-respected, well-rewarded, and well-administered teachers."

(I) TEACHER TRAINING GENERALLY

For the past two decades, the training, licensing, and certifying of teachers for the public school system have been remarkably similar across North America. While the authority to license and certify rests with the province or state, responsibility for pre-service training has been delegated to universities. A notable exception is British Columbia, where the College of Teachers, created in 1988 and governed by a twenty-member council of teachers, has been granted the authority to approve teacher education programs and to issue certificates.

The teacher education programs too have been strikingly similar. For the most part, they consist of a four-year B.Ed., a five-year blended (with arts and science) program, or a one- or two-year post-baccalaureate degree. An extended school-based practicum, usually at least one semester, is now a standard feature of most programs.

In recent years, the value of teacher preparation courses has been questioned, and at least three jurisdictions in the United States (California, Virginia, and Texas) have placed specific limits on the number of professional education credits. In California, for example, professional pre-service education cannot consume more than one year of coursework, including student teaching for one semester. Such measures have been taken to strengthen the academic background of teachers and to make it easier to enter the teaching profession. Generally speaking, there has been less concern about this issue in Canada, where it is felt that teacher candidates are better prepared academically and where there has been of late no general teacher shortage.

While there have been hundreds of studies and reports on teacher education in the United States, the most extensive project was a five-year "Study of Education and Educators," headed by John Goodlad and reported on in the November 1990 issue of Phi Delta Kappan. Among the persistent patterns arising out of Goodlad's data were indications of low prestige and status in schools and colleges of education; lack of a clear identity and mission for teacher education; an uneasiness among education faculty about the increasing emphasis being given to research over teaching by universities in the determination of career advancement; an ill-defined student body; and programs that lacked coherence and "were apt to change with political breezes."

While the situation in Canada is somewhat different, and the pressures for educational reform have not been as great, there are nonetheless many similarities. In a general review of Canadian teacher education programs in the mid eighties, Naiomi Hersom dealt with the controversy surrounding the relative emphasis to be placed on the acquisition of general and specific knowledge, on the one hand, and on the development of professional insights and skills, on the other. The strengths in teacher education that she identifies are the liberal education component, educational research potential, and the student teaching practicum. Among the weaknesses she reported are the low level of general and professional knowledge of graduates, the low level of skills of graduates in managing curriculum and classrooms, and the lack of research tradition in faculties of education.

(II) TEACHER TRAINING IN NEW BRUNSWICK

The responsibility for the training, licensing, and certifying of teachers for the public school system in New Brunswick rests with the Minister of Education. In 1972 the responsibility for pre-service training was delegated to the universities. As a result, both the University of New Brunswick and the Université de Moncton now offer several four-year programs leading to a Bachelor of Education degree. In addition, all four New Brunswick universities offer a one-year post-baccalaureate B.Ed. Enrolments in the B.Ed. programs are limited, and, for the most part, students are selected on the basis of their academic performance, though the Université de Moncton has a special French-language requirement, and Mount Allison conducts extensive interviews in an effort to take other indications of teaching suitability into account. All programs include at least a twelve-week practicum.

It should be noted that, while the authority to confer degrees belongs to the universities, only the Department of Education can issue licenses and certificates. A Minister's Advisory Committee on Teacher Licensing and Certification reviews policies, programs, and procedures, and periodically recommends changes.

In-service education is provided in various formats by several organizations. The universities offer extension and summer courses; the Department of Education and the teachers' associations organize conferences, seminars, and workshops at both the provincial and regional levels; and individual schools and school districts plan local in-service activities.

There appears to be a high degree of interest in in-service education, an interest shared by teachers, trustees, and the Department of Education. But while there is general support for the principle that teachers must be lifelong learners, there is concern about when and how continuing educational opportunities are offered. Some uneasiness was expressed over the number of days teachers are away from their classrooms, as well as about the timing of in-service workshops and professional development days.

(III) TEACHER TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS

Lifelong learning for personal and professional development means building on a solid academic base. This includes a good general education, some in-depth familiarity with their discipline or disciplines of specialization, and a sound pedagogical training. This is true regardless of the level of instruction. All teachers should have a good general understanding of how society works, and of how the major fields of knowledge are organized. They should know how to find information on many subjects and be able to assess its utility and validity to their teaching. They should also, it goes without saying, be literate, articulate, and numerate.

> **10. The Commission believes that the best way to ensure this is to require of all teachers that they complete an undergraduate degree (normally in arts or science) either before, or concurrently with, the B.Ed., and we so recommend.**

We regard this requirement as being as important for elementary as for secondary teachers and subject specialists. It takes no less a sophisticated understanding of the nature of literature, science, or history, for example, to interpret it to young children. Indeed, in some important respects, the challenge to both academic and pedagogical competence is greater. We also believe that it is desirable that there be more mobility for teachers between the grade divisions of schools, so that a better understanding develops of the challenges facing teachers at different levels. It is desirable also that elementary teachers have as many career and administrative options as their secondary colleagues. A degree in arts or science would help make these things possible. It would also provide a credential which would be advantageous to the teacher who, for whatever reason, wished at some point to pursue another occupation.

> **11. We recommend that faculties of education, arts, and sciences at all New Brunswick universities develop procedures to ensure the effective co-ordination of teacher education programs, and, further, that they consider together the best configurations and content of academic courses for those programs.**

All New Brunswick universities have an enormous stake in the quality of our public school system; its graduates constitute more than 80 per cent of the university student population.

The preparation of teachers therefore is a responsibility which must be assumed by the whole university, not just by the faculty of education. It is essential that energetic partnerships among the faculties of education, arts, and science are formed to ensure the best integrated academic and professional training for future teachers. This is intended, not to diminish the role of the faculty of education, but, on the contrary, to strengthen it .

> **12. In light of the almost unanimous judgment of teachers about its value, we recommend that an extended practicum continue to be a part of pre-service training. We would also recommend that the universities, the two teachers' associations, and the Department of Education redouble their co-operative efforts to select, encourage, support, and reward effective and conscientious supervising teachers.**

Finally, we would urge faculties of education to continue to refine their processes of selection of candidates in order to evaluate not only academic performance but personal suitability. As important as academic achievement is, it is in itself no guarantee of teaching success. While there is no agreement at present on suitable selection criteria, it is essential that those responsible for making career-determining choices for students continue to be seized of the need to make them as comprehensively as possible.

(IV) AN INDUCTION YEAR

No matter how well the teacher education program has fulfilled its purposes, and no matter how successful the practicum has been, the first year for a new teacher is almost invariably a difficult experience. Coping with unfamiliar curriculum materials, managing a classroom, developing pedagogical strategies, as well as lesson plans, assuming some routine school responsibilities, and taking part in at least one extra-curricular activity leaves little time for adequate preparation, quiet reflection on why something worked and something did not, or seeking help from more experienced colleagues. After much discussion with many people about how to make the transition into teaching as smooth and effective as possible, the Commission is of the view that a new teacher's first year should be modified to take into account the need for greater preparation and self-evaluation time and for mentoring by a successful senior colleague. That year is the most formative in the careers of most teachers. It is important that the habits formed and the attitudes adopted be sound and conducive, not just to survival, but to success and satisfaction.

> **13. The Commission recommends that, during the first year, a teacher be assigned a light teaching load (which would extend to extra-curricular, committee, and supervisory duties), be provided with a mentor teacher chosen for his or her excellence in teaching and for the ability to work well with and to help colleagues, and be given such other support as may be necessary to get off to a successful start in teaching.**

During the year, the new teacher would not be considered an intern, but would be licensed and have full responsibility for the duties assigned. Certification, however, would not occur until after a successful evaluation of the teacher's performance at the end of the year by a committee composed of the principal of the school, the superintendent, a university faculty member, and a teacher from the same or another school, all of whom would have had opportunity to observe the teacher's performance during the year. An unsuccessful evaluation would normally result in the teacher being given a second induction year. (Two unsuccessful evaluations would normally result in denial of certification.) Permanence of appointment would be granted after the first year of regular teaching, again assuming satisfactory performance.

Care should be taken in the selection, support, and evaluation of the mentor teachers. Their role is crucial to the success of the induction year, and suitable ways of recognizing that role should be found.

We recognize that there are other routes by which new teachers gain teaching experience in New Brunswick schools. Some, unable to find a position, or not wishing to teach full-time, may begin by doing substitute teaching or by filling in for part of a year for a teacher on leave. These less-direct routes are not uncommon and pose challenges for the determination of who is and is not a "first-year" teacher. It is the Commission's view, however, that with a little ingenuity and good judgment such issues can be resolved.

(v) CERTIFICATION

Though, for the most part, teachers teach in their areas of specialization, it is the case that many also teach subjects for which they have little academic preparation. Once licensed, a teacher may teach any subject assigned and accepted. Many secondary teachers are assigned three subjects, even though they have majored at university in only one and taken a minor in another. This may be a necessary expedient at present, but it is not fair to either teachers or students, and is not conducive to excellence in education. Little wonder some students do not do well in mathematics, science, and language when they are taught by teachers who, often through no fault of their own, do not know their stuff.

The Commission believes that two steps should be taken to correct this practice.

> **14. a) we recommend that teaching certificates at the secondary level specify the subject areas the holders are qualified to teach.**
>
> **b) we recommend that universities (faculties of arts, science, and education) reassess the academic requirements for teachers in light of the actual needs of the schools, and ensure that all students receive both a sound general education, as well as sound training in the disciplines of concentration.**

Teachers need a broad liberal education if they are going to be flexibly qualified to meet the instructional needs of the curriculum. Teaching and learning are about making connections—among facts, events, concepts, ideas, and people. Teachers must be given the opportunity to develop the intellectual tools to make those connections.

(vi) TEACHER ASSESSMENT AND RECOGNITION

Some recent official reports on schools in Canada and the United States have recommended the periodic re-certification of teachers to ensure that appropriate professional development or appropriate evaluation of performance takes place. While we are not recommending that re-certification be instituted (we believe there are more progressive ways of fostering professional competence and currency), we are concerned that the present evaluation process is not working well in many school districts. We heard complaints about "incompetent" teaching and about how ill-suited some teachers appear to be for their profession. That there should be ineffective and perfunctory teachers is not surprising; most professions and trades have time-servers. Any occupational group, however, which aspires to the status of a profession must have fair but effective ways of dealing with serious complaints about the performance of its members. There is a widespread perception that teaching does not.

The Commission would prefer to see the teaching profession evolve in such a way as to become more self-regulating in this as in other respects. As things stand in New Brunswick at present, however, the responsibility for the formal assessment of teachers, principals, and superintendents rests with the school boards.

It is essential, and in the light of reorganization, timely for boards to give priority and the most thoughtful attention to their role in this regard. Effective evaluation requires difficult intellectual and psychological effort, and it is not surprising that any group of volunteers might shy away from the challenge it presents. It is, however, one of the most important ways in which the educational system (teachers, administrators, and boards themselves) is accountable to the people who foot the bill.

> **15. For this reason we recommend that every school board, in consultation with the Department of Education and the Teachers' Associations, review its procedures and practice for the evaluation of teachers and administrators and ensure that they are effective to their purpose, which is to make a just assessment of performance and provide information to their employees which may be helpful in their professional development.**

This does not mean of course that, in the case of teachers, the boards should do the assessment themselves, but rather that boards ensure such assessment is conscientiously and sytematically done.

The obverse side of this coin is that, while New Brunswick appears to have its fair share of effective and dedicated teachers, we do not seem to have many ways of recognizing or rewarding outstanding performance or service. Merit pay, even if it were the answer, and the

Commission is inclined to think it is not, is a matter for collective bargaining. What appears to be needed is a non-monetary program of rewards and recognitions of superior teaching. Such a program might include travel grants to conferences or to examine an educational facility in another jurisdiction, awards of computers or books, and special short leaves to pursue a professional interest.

> **16. Consistent with this perspective, the Commission recommends that the Department of Education, the Teachers' Associations, and the school boards form a joint committee to prepare a program of rewards and recognitions for excellence in teaching.**

(VII) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers in New Brunswick are a middle-aging group. The average age is now 43. Experience brings some advantages, but flexibility is not always one of them. It is therefore important that teachers be encouraged to refresh their knowledge and update their skills through well-designed and well-delivered professional development and in-service programs. The Commission regards this as a particularly important issue.

Professional development needs to take many forms— independent study, school-based workshops, distance education, return to university, among others; and should be for many purposes— teaching strategies, classroom management, curriculum implementation, special education. In light of this, there are roles to be played by the teachers' associations, the school boards, the faculties of education, and the Department of Education in meeting the need. There is a perception at present that professional development and in-service activities are not, on the whole, well planned or adequately funded.

With a slightly longer and less variable school year, it would be necessary for the sponsoring agencies to schedule in-service activities more creatively during the school year and to take advantage of the summer recess for activities that require more than a day or two to run. Occasionally in their careers, however, teachers will require a longer period during term to pursue a specific professional development goal.

> **17. In addition to the current arrangements for sabbatical leave, we recommend that the Department and the boards give consideration to the introduction of shorter-term leaves, leaves which might range from a week to several months. This should be done selectively, with a panel of teachers and administrators selecting from among the candidates on the basis of written proposals for projects that relate to a school, district, or provincial priority of direct benefit to the students. It would be a requirement that the professional benefits of the leave be shared with colleagues through such vehicles as conferences, workshops, one-on-one collaboration, or publication.**

The Commission was informed that some jurisdictions in the United States have recently mandated professional development for teachers as a condition for the renewal of teaching certificates. We believe the challenge in New Brunswick is not so much to persuade teachers to commit to professional development as it is to provide the opportunities and resources teachers need to pursue their professional goals. We are confident that, if the several parties concerned can collaborate to offer a varied, attractive, and coherent program of in-service and professional development activities, the teachers will do the rest.

Many briefs from teachers' groups drew attention to the stress teachers are experiencing as they attempt to meet the broad, often ill-defined expectations of society. One area of concern stands out: the need for help in the implementation of new teaching strategies. The seemingly happiest and most successful teachers the Commission encountered were those who had discovered a pedagogical approach that works for them. For a few, it was a computer-assisted learning program which had ignited student interest and achievement; for most, it was a new instructional strategy. Human nature being what it is, no single approach works for everyone, and a strategy that may work well for an individual teacher may not work well for every student in that teacher's class. Hence the need for teachers to have more than one arrow in their quiver.

Among approaches to teaching and learning that teachers in New Brunswick recommended for our consideration are the following:

- Mastery Learning
- Effective Schools
- Co-operative Learning
- Actualization des forces vitales
- The Paideia Proposal
- Whole Language
- Control Theory/Reality Theory
- Bloom's Taxonomy
- Peer Coaching
- Invitational Education

We bother to list these because they illustrate the range of professional interest and creativity among the province's teachers, and because we have drawn on ideas from all of them in forming our views of what is best for New Brunswick's schools.

The teaching/learning strategy of which we heard most from teachers was co-operative learning. Now well established in some New Brunswick schools, this approach seems to hold promise of a significant, if not revolutionary, change in classroom teaching.

Co-operative learning (not to be confused with co-operative education) is really nothing more (but nothing less either) than students working together in small groups to solve problems, discuss issues, or research topics under the teacher's direction. There are group goals and individual accountability. The New Brunswick experience seems to conform with the more extensive experimentation in the United States where, according to a recent newsletter of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, "advocates of the technique say it improves students academic achievement and social skills, helps students from different backgrounds become friends, and smooths the mainstreaming of students with disabilities. Co-operative learning is also touted as a viable alternative to ability grouping and tracking."

There can be little doubt that many teachers would welcome being introduced to new strategies which might assist them to make their classrooms less regimented and learning more dynamic, and to stimulate students to be more participative in the educational process. Making new ideas work in the classroom, however, is not as easy as it sometimes appears to outsiders that it ought to be. Making co-operative learning work effectively requires knowledge of how to determine the optimum size of groups for various tasks and topics, how to prepare students for focussed interaction, and how to orchestrate a classroom where many students are talking at the same time. By and large, the help that teachers need here should come from colleagues in the system who are successfully implementing such strategies.

The Commission is attracted to co-operative learning primarily because it appears to be effective in stimulating interest and developing students' academic and social skills. But there are other appealing features. It invites the students to take a more active part in the process of learning, thus reinforcing the idea of partnership between themselves and their teachers. When mastered, it is less stressful on teachers (though not less easy or challenging) than lecturing. Finally, where it is used, it seems to encourage a spirit of co-operation and collegiality among teachers and to have a positive effect upon a school's esprit de corps.

Learning how to use co-operative strategies, or any other effective teaching method, will not be accomplished in one-shot in-service workshops. Essential to effective pedagogical change is the opportunity, encouragement, and professional direction for teachers to carry out detailed and continuing analysis of their teaching. This means better designed and more sustained in-service programs; it also means opportunities for teachers to take short courses on educational subjects and practices relevant to their professional development. Some of this can be undertaken by teachers during the summer. It should also be encouraged by school boards and the Department of Education by the granting of short leaves, as described above.

18. We recommend that, in planning in-service and professional developmental activities, the Department of Education and the school boards give strong emphasis to pedagogical strategies, both the theory and practice of them.

The problem with many of these new strategies, as others have pointed out, is that schools, as currently structured, with lockstep grading, standard class periods, and curricula that have to be "covered," are not hospitable to them, any more than they are to new technologies. Yet it is clear that, as our society and its economy becomes more information-based and as knowledge-work becomes the norm, the skills required of citizens and workers—critical thinking, team work, problem solving—are those the new instructional strategies and technologies are designed to cultivate.

(VIII) FACULTIES OF EDUCATION

Faculties of education in New Brunswick universities have, over the years, been responsive to the needs of the profession they serve. While the Commission heard some complaints about perceived unhelpful aspects of teacher education programs, we also heard some compliments for a number of recent initiatives taken by the faculties.

The complaints that occurred most often were that many education professors seemed remote from the challenges and problems faced by classroom teachers, and that, as classroom teachers themselves, they did not seemed disposed to use the interest-generating strategies they espoused. We cannot judge the validity of these criticisms, but believe it is important that education faculty members should maintain an ongoing and meaningful engagement with teachers in the field. It is vital to the continuing relevance of any professional faculty that it should know how its graduates are faring in their practice, and how valuable or otherwise they are finding the training they received.

19. We would therefore recommend that New Brunswick faculties of education carry out regular, systematic surveys of their graduates (say, five years and ten years after graduation), as well as, and simultaneously, of the administrators to whom they report (principals, vice-principals, or superintendents), to discover what aspects of their training teachers have found most and least useful, and to seek advice on how education programs could be improved.

We believe teachers and administrators would value the opportunity to report on their experiences, and the results could be highly beneficial to faculties and professors in their own self-evaluation.

20. We endorse the practice of using outstanding teachers to give university courses on a part-time or seconded basis and recommend that faculties consider extending it.

This brings valuable current professional experience into the university classroom, which is beneficial to both students and professors. Similarly, we believe that faculties of education should take steps to ensure that all professors have frequent and mutually-beneficial contact with the schools.

As others have been who have looked at this subject, we are concerned that faculties of education are not accorded the respect within their universities that the importance of their work deserves. In this regard, we wish to endorse the view expressed by Dr. Stuart Smith in his recent Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Canadian University Education when he recommended that

> *An overall goal should be the elevation of faculties of education to a highly respected status. To achieve this, universities should examine the potential contribution of faculties of education at the university itself. Universities should either make better use of the expertise at these faculties or take steps to improve the level of expertise available there.*

Because teaching is so crucial to New Brunswick's and Canada's social and economic future, we also wish to concur in another of Dr. Smith's recommendations, and, in doing so, we call upon all educators and the government in this province to lend their support as well. That recommendation is as follows:

> *Canada should create immediately a Fund for the Improvement of Education along the lines of the FIPSE [Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education] in the United States. The Commission recommends that the Fund be administered by the SSHRC [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council recently merged into the Canada Council], but receive an earmarked allotment of financial resources. It should deal with the improvement of education generally but have a special allocation for postsecondary education, administered by a separate Postsecondary Panel. The Commission recommends that the projects supported by this fund be of a practical nature with clear implications for short-term application of the findings. . . .*
>
> *Based on comparisons with the United States Fund, the Postsecondary Panel alone would have an annual budget of a little over one and a half million dollars per year, while the entire Fund for the Improvement of Education would require a total budget of six million dollars. . . .*

It is clear, were such a fund established, with such a practical and short-term application of the research sponsored, that teaching at all levels in Canada would benefit, and classroom teachers, as well as professors, would have a source of financial support in their search for better means and methods of instruction and learning. Indeed, one likely consequence would be to make professors and teachers collaborators in the projects proposed, since both would bring essential expertise.

21. This Commission therefore recommends that the Government of Canada create a fund for the improvement of education along the lines recommended by Dr. Stuart Smith.

(IX) COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The recent history of collective bargaining for teachers and other public employees in New Brunswick has not created confidence in proposals for change. An element of mistrust exists, which leaves many teachers wishing for a different working environment, but suspicious of the process of fundamental change which is necessary to create it.

There is evidence, however, that the present dilemma is recognized at leadership levels within the provincial government and the New Brunswick Teachers' Federation, and that the parties may be prepared to explore new arrangements to help improve the morale and authority of the individual teacher and the individual school.

The lengthy bargaining periods or work action required to resolve previous differences can be eliminated through adoption of an appropriate process of final offer selection. This would provide that, after a specified period of time, the parties (the government and the teachers' union) would each submit their final positions on the unresolved issues to a third party who would have the authority to decide between them. Unlike some other forms of arbitration, the third party would be limited to selecting one of the positions already presented, and could not create a third outcome. Because each party knows that it could become the "loser" through a forced choice, there is greater pressure to reach agreement or at least to present realistic final positions at the bargaining table. Moreover, the prior stipulation of time limits ensures that issues are determined within a realistic period of time.

22. For these reasons the Commission recommends that the provincial government and the teachers' union develop means, including an appropriate process of final offer selection, to reduce the degree of stress and obviate the disruptions created by existing patterns of collective bargaining.

The frustrations of the present process could be reduced further if the parties could agree to limit the number of issues which would be opened for bargaining at the expiration of any one collective agreement. It would also be beneficial if certain matters could be removed from the collective agreement, and left for determination at the level of the individual school district, or even better, within individual schools. For example, teachers within an individual school could be permitted to agree to increase the size of certain classes in order to purchase new instructional technology or engage more secretarial support.

At present, school principals are included in the teachers' bargaining unit, and there are therefore no "management" personnel within the individual school. Arguments have been put forward that the quality of professional life within schools could be strengthened if principals held managerial status and were excluded from the teachers' bargaining unit, as was originally the case, or, alternatively, were placed in a bargaining unit of their own. Given the degree of centralization which now exists, it does not seem feasible to envisage the immediate delegation of sufficient managerial authority — including the right to hire and fire — to create full management authority within the individual school. Without such authority the term "management" has no real meaning within the framework of labour-management relations. In contemporary New Brunswick schools, a greater impact on the vigour and quality of the educational process can be achieved by strengthening the collegial or professional process by granting to school personnel—principal and teachers alike—more say in the decisions which affect them, their students, and their schools. This includes the right of principals to make effective recommendations on which teachers are to be assigned to their schools.

Consideration should be given to allowing individual teachers to take a number of vacation days of their own choosing. While this would require the use of supply teachers, the greater element of control which this would provide over personal work schedules should also improve teacher morale, without the need for a corresponding increase in cost.

If some of these changes are considered too sweeping to enact on a province-wide basis, they should be implemented selectively wherever sufficient enthusiasm exists to proceed with the experiment. Rather than compromise the long-term outcome, such flexibility could be a harbinger of times when the achievement of greater autonomy at the school level has restored not only the image and morale, but also the authority and responsibility, of the individual teacher.

CHAPTER IV:

Curriculum

(I) REORGANIZING THE GRADE DIVISION

The predominant pattern of school organization in North America today remains the six- or seven-year elementary school, the three-year junior high school, and the three-year senior high school. This structure, particularly the junior high school, resulted from pressure earlier in the century to extend the secondary school downward by two years to achieve a better college preparation. Each element has its own characteristics and challenges. In recent years, high schools have had to adjust to the semestered, 24-credit system, while elementary schools have experienced the introduction of kindergarten. Both developments have required considerable innovation and refocussing, the impact of which will be felt for some time to come.

The Commission has engaged in considerable discussion on the three elements of the school system—elementary, junior high, and senior high. While the elementary and high school levels appear to be well defined and understood, there is concern that the role of junior high schools is neither. Not only must junior high be an intellectually stimulating experience for children, it must also attempt to meet the social, emotional, and physical demands of early adolescence, an especially difficult stage of human development. It is our impression that junior high schools are generally too imitative of senior high schools in their organization and educational strategies, and consequently are not well suited to the transitional phase being experienced by many of their clientele.

One symptom of this may be the discipline problems that seem to exist in disproportionate measure at this level, about which the Commission heard so much during its consultations. For many students, the combined effects of adolescence and unstable family circumstances give rise to a troubled period of pain, anger, and confusion. Even with a very supportive home life, students often find adolescence a psychologically disorienting time as they try to reconcile the controlled environment of the school with their own drives towards independence and self-discovery. The concentration of so many students in a single level of the school system at such a volatile phase of personal development would not seem to be in their own or their teachers' best interest.

It is the view of the Commission that a reorganizing of the grade division should be initiated as a step towards a more rational school structure. Having heard extensive comment on such matters as semestering, core programming, alternative schooling, and discipline,

> **23. the Commission recommends that a physical and philosophical reordering of the current grade structure be undertaken. The restructuring would result in the extension of high school downward to include grade 9. The Department of Education should, depending on local demographic patterns, and until one structure is judged to be clearly superior to the other, institute either a K-8 sequence, or a K-5 and a middle school from grades 6-8.**

The recommended expansion of high school to include grade 9 is based on the view that four years of high school would permit a more appropriate period to concentrate on studies leading to post-secondary education or entry into the labour force. There is also a belief that getting fifteen- or sixteen-year-olds into high school a year earlier is likely to have a positive effect on their educational motivation, not to mention on discipline in the lower grades.

It should be noted that, while the predominant structure in New Brunswick is a K-6 elementary school, a 7-9 junior high school, and a 10-12 high school, there are already many deviations from this norm. In fact, about one half of all students are in schools which do not follow this pattern. The Commission cannot make a conclusive argument for either the K-8 structure or the K-5/6-8 division. In some cases, local demographics will dictate which structure should be adopted. In others, the district and the Department may wish to pursue both structures prior to a final decision. The important issues have more to do with the philosophy behind the curriculum and with optimal effectiveness in local operations than with organizational neatness or conformity.

(II) CURRICULUM: A COMMON CORE

Philosophy

In Issues Paper I, the Commission drew attention to the relationship between educational goals and the emerging needs of the workplace as we move from a resource-based to a knowledge-driven, globally-integrated economy. Quite a number of briefs, as well as individuals who met with the Commission, interpreted this as reflecting a bias towards preparing our young people to be productive members of the labour force at the expense of other educational purposes.

There is consensus in New Brunswick that the content of our education should ensure the development of the whole individual. We agree, and recommend the confirmation of this philosophy in the mission of the Department of Education and in the goals which the Department and school districts should set. Consistent with this objective, however, is the need to acknowledge that children enter the education system at different stages of development, and that they develop skills in different ways and at different speeds. It is a challenge for society as a whole to ensure that children enter school ready to learn; the challenge for the school system is to recognize that each child is different, and that these differences need to be fostered and channelled into effective learning efforts.

> **24. a)It is recommended that the curriculum reflect a commitment to provide for the development of the whole child. In addition to their study of the humanities, mathematics, and sciences, students should have the opportunity to develop skills in the fine arts and the physical arts. We recommend a curriculum which provides a common core of studies in four categories:**
>
> 1. **Humanities (French/English, Social Studies, French/English as a second language).**
> 2. **Mathematics and Sciences**
> 3. **Fine Arts (Music, Visual Arts)**
> 4. **Practical Arts (Physical Education, Technology, Co-operative Education)**
>
> **b)In the first nine years (K-8), it is recommended that there be a common curriculum, providing for content in each of the four categories indicated above. The high school program (grades 9-12) should consist of a broad common core, with a limited number of options relating to the intended career goals and interests of the students.**

Elementary

At the current elementary level (K-6), it is clear that substantial innovation and creativity are being employed to ensure that the curriculum and the way in which it is presented are suited to student needs. The Commission heard from teachers and others enthusiastic commendations for presentation strategies such as co-operative learning, talents unlimited, enrichment models, and invitational learning. We are encouraged by the spirit of renewal which characterizes many elementary schools and we support the interdisciplinary and co-operative approaches now developing. The impact of the universal public kindergarten on the rest of the elementary school system will, we believe, reinforce this trend. The activity-based focus of kindergarten is consistent with the interdisciplinary and co-operative methods.

The Commission is aware of the major education reform now taking place in British Columbia, where an ungraded primary system has been introduced. We support the intent of the Department of Education to assess the suitability of such an approach for New Brunswick. In focussing on individual student needs, rather than requiring students to conform to the requirements of a too rigid curriculum, an ungraded and integrated curriculum would seem both academically and developmentally sound.

As expressed in a brief to the Commission,

> *Early childhood educators have...[called] for a fundamental revamping of universal programs to ensure that they become truly inclusive of all children—whatever their socio-economic status or level of educational achievement. [This] involves the deployment of three strategies: the introduction of ungraded schooling in the primary years, the involvement of parents as partners and a reconceptualization of the curriculum, one which puts the whole child at its centre.*

The Commission supports this position.

> **25. While we are not ready to advocate that New Brunswick move immediately to an ungraded primary, we believe that it is an educational development that deserves serious assessment and would recommend that the Department of Education carry through with its plans to make such an assessment.**

Middle Years

As noted earlier, the current junior high schools, particularly those in urban centres, have considerable difficulty coping with the impact of adolescence on behaviour and learning. In addition to the earlier recommendation to move grade 9 to the high school, it is our view that the present approach to the middle grades requires rethinking. The impersonality which characterizes high schools often gets emulated in junior highs. Teachers tend to specialize in one or two subjects, and students move from one class to another with little planned interaction either with their peers or their teachers. It is widely thought that a school for early adolescents must be designed to meet the social, emotional, and physical needs of students, as well as to challenge them intellectually.

These years in a child's development, whether they are called "junior high years," "middle years," or "transitional years," have a character and purpose of their own. While this stage must continue to serve a role as a bridge between elementary and high school, there is a need to give a stronger focus to the identity of this level in and of itself. Its program of learning and its administrative organization must be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of children passing from childhood to adolescence at very different rates of physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. To meet the variable needs of early adolescents while maintaining an ordered and purposeful environment is perhaps the greatest single challenge in the field of education. Teachers who manage to do it year after year—and we met some and heard of others—have very special gifts of mind and personality.

A publication of the National Middle School Association, This We Believe (1992), summarizes the philosophical base for middle level education. It notes that the most successful practices are those based on what is known about the early adolescent. Such practices have included personalization of the school (that is, using every opportunity through "teaming and subschools" to make the school smaller and more personal); total school counselling, in which all adults in the school assume the role of counsellor; less subject specialization; more interdisciplinary team organization and block schedules; and more emphasis on teaching skills, hands-on activities, and application of information learned.

It is our view that the environment of junior high/middle schools must be consciously altered to provide a more accommodating setting for all students.

> **26. To this end, and consistent with the need to focus on the unique challenges presented by adolescents, the Commission recommends that the following initiatives be undertaken:**
>
> 1. **schools adopt an interdisciplinary approach to teaching;**
> 2. **teachers be assigned a minimum of two subjects for the same class;**
> 3. **schools experiment with multi-grade or cross-grade classroom groupings;**
> 4. **each student be assigned an adult mentor from among the staff of the school.**

These recommendations may have far reaching implications for whichever structure is adopted: middle schools, or K-8. They are designed not so much to affect the content of the curriculum as the way in which it is delivered. Essentially, the Commission is of the view that the fundamental structure of junior high schools must be altered. These measures will not in themselves resolve the apparent discipline problems being experienced in many urban junior high schools. These require a more comprehensive response. A plan designed to make junior highs/middle schools more inviting environments, however, can only help in this regard.

With reference to program focus, we believe with others that the curriculum should continue to accentuate basic skills rather than information, skills in the accessing and acquisition of knowledge, as well as in analyzing and evaluating information and ideas, and in making conceptual and empirical connections. The curriculum must become more student-centred, not only by stressing hands-on activities but by involving students in decisions about certain aspects of the curriculum. Such considerations should capitalize on the desire of early adolescents to assume a greater independence in the conduct of their lives.

High School

As a result of reform initiated in the mid-80s, New Brunswick's high school program of studies is generally viewed quite favourably. There has been considerable comment, most of it favourable, on the semester system which has now been implemented province-wide. Two concerns were commonly identified to the Commission: one was the "4 over 4"—the requirement that teachers teach all four periods one semester every two years; the other was the time gap which may exist for students between courses taken in the same discipline. While these are legitimate problems, the Commission believes that can be ameliorated through flexible and creative deployment of staff and scheduling at the district level.

There are several other issues pertinent to the high school curriculum of which the Commission has taken note. The first relates to the course of study. With the 24-credit system, students are required to take 15 compulsory credits and 9 options. Beyond this, there is considerable variation in requirements between the francophone and anglophone divisions. The francophone division requires a minimum of three courses in mathematics and two in science to graduate. This is one course more in each subject than the anglophone division. While we are not opposed to variation between the two divisions, we are inclined to question the value in today's world of a high school diploma which contains only one course in science and two in mathematics. Likewise, the availability and recognition of optional courses vary significantly between the divisions, as well as between urban and rural high schools. The delivery of optional courses to ensure relevance to student need and interest is laudable, but the Commission is concerned that the seeming proliferation of optional courses has the potential of undermining the quality of the high school diploma.

A second issue which deserves discussion is that of offering courses for students with different levels of ability. Although the traditional streaming of students into academic and vocational fields has been discontinued, it is clear that the tendency to differentiate students through regular and modified programs continues to operate throughout the province. (This should not be confused with the small number of non-academic students who pursue a program of practical studies.) Within many subject areas, students may take courses at different levels (level 1 or 2 for francophones, level 2 or 3 for anglophones). Although curriculum objectives are stated to be the same between courses at different levels, with the higher-level courses going into more depth, the Commission views such differentiation to be a holdover from the days when students with different ability were streamed. We believe it desirable to seek alternative ways to support academically weaker students in obtaining the necessary basics to pursue the regular high school program.

A third area of concern is with the relationship between curriculum and the career goals of some students. The traditional streaming of students provided a clear delineation between students who would go on to post-secondary education and those who would directly enter the labour market. At the senior high level, the concentration on the "academic" student resulted in the "vocational" student getting the short end of the educational stick. With our society and labour market now requiring a strong foundation of skills and knowledge in all high school graduates, how we address the educational needs of the more than 50 per cent of high school students who do not proceed to post-secondary studies requires reconsideration.

The Commission advocates the development of clear options for students who will not go on to post-secondary education. Such options require strong partnerships with industry and may take the form of co-operative education, formal apprenticeship, or other combinations of education and work experience. We are concerned, however, that the extensive concentration on specific skill development which occurs in some high schools may have limited benefit in preparing students for the world in which they will have to make a living. We accept the view, expressed to the Commission by the Canadian Manufacturers Association, that it is the role of the private sector to do specific skill training. Schools should concentrate on developing literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong learning skills.

The Commission, in making the recommendations on the high school program, assumes the continuation of the current semestering system. We feel that, if alternatives to semestering are introduced, the principles which form the basis for these recommendations would still apply and should be respected.

27. The Commission recommends the following revisions to the high school program:

1. **with the addition of Grade 9, the number of compulsory courses required for graduation be increased to 23, of which 4 must be in mathematics and 3 in science;**
2. **optional courses be selected from a more limited list of courses, including those offering greater linkages with the labour market, such as co-operative education and apprenticeship;**
3. **the Department undertake a review of the principle of streaming and the current status of programs at different levels, with a view to ensuring that all graduates possess a common core of knowledge and skills required to meet future academic and career challenges.**

In concluding this section, we wish to call attention to the increasing numbers of high school students returning for an additional course or courses beyond graduation. This trend has accelerated significantly since the introduction of semestering, to the extent that in some districts an estimate of 15-20 per cent of graduating students return for additional courses. It appears that the reasons for returning are quite varied, although they tend to relate to the choice of courses taken and marks received in the high school program, and the current state of the labour market. We suggest that the Department and districts monitor this phenomenon to understand better what significance it may have for curriculum design and delivery.

(III) CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Primary responsibility for curriculum development is vested in the Department of Education. The principal vehicle is the Provincial Curriculum Advisory Committee, which works with the Program Development and Implementation Branch of the Department. Membership on the Committee includes representatives of organizations involved in public education in the province. These groups include teachers, trustees, school superintendents, school supervisors, universities, the Department of Advanced Education and Labour, and the Home and School Association.

The implementation of new curriculum requires the provision of prescribed curriculum resources, professional development opportunities for teachers, administrators, and curriculum support people at the district office, and on-going teacher collaboration during the implementation phase.

A number of teachers and district administrators have raised with the Commission concerns about the adequacy of either additional resources or professional development opportunities when new curriculum is being introduced. While we are not in a position to assess the justice of those concerns, we wish to reiterate that adequate resources and professional development are both essential to the successful implementation of new curricula. The Commission wishes particularly to recognize the value of teacher collaboration in bringing about significant curriculum change. Every attempt should be made to provide time for skill-training workshops for teachers. While the most effective professional development normally is of the in-service kind, the use of subject-council sessions, summer institutes, and other educational conferences should also be contemplated.

Current curriculum philosophies adopted by the Department of Education are consistent with national and international trends. Particularly in language arts, mathematics, and science there is a move towards developing learning activities which encourage students to investigate, describe, develop, predict, test, and discuss ideas. The goal is to engage students more in their learning and to encourage them to see themselves as creating knowledge rather than merely absorbing it. Most teachers are generous in their support of this approach and have found it necessary to incorporate new classroom techniques, such as co-operative learning, to ensure effective implementation. There are of course increased resource requirements, such as classroom materials, when students take an active role in their learning; this too needs to be provided for when new techniques and methods are introduced.

The curriculum in use in New Brunswick schools appears to be reasonably up to date. In recent years, emphasis has been placed on updating core curriculum in language arts, science, and mathematics, and in introducing additional options in high school. For example, in the anglophone sector, a new mathematics curriculum was implemented at the elementary level in the fall of 1988 and the following year in the junior high schools. New mathematics curriculum documents and new textual materials are currently being piloted in grades 10 and 11. Pilots in grade 12 will begin next year, with expected implementation in September 1993. Similar initiatives have been introduced in the francophone sector, at all levels, beginning in 1986.

While concern has been expressed about the state of curriculum in our schools, it is our impression that the Department has effectively carried out its responsibilities in this area. This is not to suggest that there are not issues which require continued attention. In addition to the principal concerns of resources and professional development to support new curriculum, suggestions which have been received include broadening the membership of certain curriculum committees to include representatives from the private sector, shortening the period for new curriculum development, and implementing more frequent but less dramatic revisions to curricula. These suggestions appear to contain some validity, and we would encourage their consideration in the process of curriculum development.

(IV) ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMMING

In our visits to schools, our review of briefs, and our discussions with students, parents, teachers, and administrators, we have been struck by the almost unanimous recognition of the fact that not all students can cope with the current school structure. Granted that most of the problems students face are not created by the school, the challenge to our schools is none the less urgent for that. That challenge is to find ways and means to motivate students and channel their formidable energies into creative intellectual and social development.

As noted earlier, there are clear signs that innovation at the elementary level is addressing the needs of the individual learner. The challenge remains to extend these initiatives throughout the elementary system. Resources are required for guidance and counselling, additional methods and resource teachers, school psychologists, and other educational specialists, if this is to be accomplished. Nevertheless, the process is well under way.

At the junior and senior high schools, we have also been impressed with the level of attention devoted to the needs of students unable to cope with their current environment. Over the past several years, the stay-in-school initiative has had a dramatic and positive impact on how at-risk students are viewed and supported. There is recognition that drop-out levels, even though we appear already to have the lowest in Canada, must be further reduced. It is regrettable that most drop-outs are students who are quite capable academically, and that many of them leave school prematurely because they cannot find the stimulation of interest they need. Leaving school before graduation with expectations of still leading an economically productive life is no longer a viable option for most students. It is also recognized that the marginal cost of keeping students in school increases dramatically when focussed on at-risk students.

The Commission has heard universal support for the maintenance and expansion of alternative programming for at-risk students. The financial support for this programming is almost exclusively through such temporary initiatives as the federal/provincial Youth Strategy and the Stay-in-School Program. It is apparent that these strategies have been successful in raising the consciousness of New Brunswickers about the importance of high school completion and in providing a means for many students to do so who would otherwise have dropped out. We have heard pleas from school administrators, students, and teachers to safeguard these programs. The reality is that, because they are subject to federal/provincial agreements, the programs themselves are at risk. So important and effective have they become, however, that it is almost unthinkable that programs such as Work Orientation Workshops (WOW) and Co-operative Education might suddenly disappear from the system. A specific recommendation on the continuation of these federal/provincial initiatives is contained in Chapter V.

Made conscious through our visits to schools and our discussion with teachers of some of the educational initiatives under way, the Commission wrote to all the school superintendents in the province requesting details on new activities occurring in their district. As expected, we received a most impressive response. As the description of these initiatives which is provided in Appendix F of this report will reveal, it is apparent that some districts are undertaking extremely creative forms of alternative programming. These range from an alternative school in one district to the delivery of local option credits in fishing and forestry in several others.

The Commission is persuaded that it is this questing spirit which is the key to a superior educational system, and that such experimentation and evaluation of alternative schooling and programming should be encouraged. We must find ways of enfranchising students who for various reasons, some self-inflicted, some inflicted by others, find the traditional learning environment alien to their interests and perceived needs. We should take the view that, for many students, it is the system and not they who are failing, not because that view is the whole truth but because it contains an important element of truth that challenges our usual assumption.

> **28. While endorsing a common curriculum from K-8 and a common core in high school, the Commission recommends that the Department and districts consider the desirability and feasibility of creating alternative schooling and programming to serve our diverse student population.**

Without restricting the scope of this recommendation, the Commission would suggest, as a first priority, a broad investigation of alternatives which respond to students with unique needs or interests. There are many examples of such alternatives, including programs with specialized focus (Fine Arts, Sports) and small, community schools providing a "non-institutional" environment for at-risk students. Within New Brunswick, there are already examples of such alternatives: ACES in Chatham, the IDEA School in Saint John, the Pathfinder system in use in a number of locations, and the International Baccalaureate offered at Saint John High School. Likewise, the Youth Strategy Learning Centres provide an effective alternative educational setting for drop-outs. We are concerned that these alternatives are, for the most part, considered "add ons" to regular programs; that is, they will only be established or maintained if special money is available. Increasingly, the school system will be challenged to incorporate alternative programs within base budgets. Such programs should not be considered luxuries, but essential components of a system serving a diverse population and a swiftly changing society.

(v) EQUITY

The Commission has already stated its view that education includes the process of acquiring, along with knowledge and skills, the values needed to build a better world. A necessary component of the socialization role of the schools is to enable learners to acquire such values. Cardinal among these values in a socially, linguistically, ethnically, racially, and religiously diverse society like Canada are tolerance and respect.

Human Rights

The notion of human rights encompasses both the elimination of discrimination on the basis of such factors as race, sex, and ethnic origin, and respect for, and promotion of, such fundamental values as fairness, equality, justice, and compassion.

Some have advocated that a course on values be part of the curriculum. Others have expressed the view that values and human rights must be taught through all aspects of the curriculum.

The Commission is aware of the work performed by the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission in the area of human rights education. It has also taken note of the Ministerial Statement on Multiculturalism/Human Rights Education tabled in the Legislative Assembly in 1990, and of the policy directions adopted by the Department of Education following the Malcolm Ross case.

> **29. Accordingly, the Commission recommends that**
>
> **1. the Department of Education**
>
> **(a) ensure that the curriculum and pedagogical material used in the schools are both free of racial and cultural biases and contribute to the enhancement of the understanding and respect of racial and cultural diversity;**
>
> **(b) pursue the policy direction for human rights it has adopted;**
>
> **2. the Department of Education, the teachers' associations, and the faculties of education take appropriate measures to ensure that teachers are equipped to deal with human rights issues;**
>
> **3. the education system at all levels be monitored to ensure that it is free of discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion.**

Women

What the Commission heard about female learners goes far beyond the concerns it had raised in Issues Paper I about the underrepresentation of female students in mathematics and science. The Commission was reminded that the root cause of the underrepresentation of women in traditional male occupations is not some psychological or physiological predisposition, but factors that are cultural and systemic.

The Commission agrees with those who say that the process of removing barriers to equity for women begins with stereotype-free pedagogical material, an unbiased curriculum, and guidance and counselling that emphasizes non-traditional careers for females. It recognizes and commends the steps that have been taken in this direction by the Department of Education, the Women's Directorate, the engineering profession, and others.

To be successful, however, the process must be nurtured and complemented by a visionary human resource plan that provides female learners with a more dynamic and realistic image of the role of women in society, as well as more role models both inside and outside the school system. In New Brunswick, nearly 63 per cent of the teachers are female, while only 22 per cent of the principalships and 26 per cent of the vice-principalships are held by women. At the secondary school level, 70 per cent of the departmental head positions are held by men. The gender imbalance at all management levels, from the Department of Education to the professional associations to the local schools, sends the wrong message to female students. At the very least, it creates a distorted image of the leadership and management capacities of women.

Although policies and guidelines aimed at employment equity have been in place for provincial government employees for some years, they are not, by themselves, enough. To begin to redress the system-wide gender imbalance at the senior levels, initiatives will first be required at the earlier levels. As things stand, there is not a pool of qualified candidates for positions of added responsibility. The certification level statistics reveal that while 56 per cent of the Certificate level V teachers are female, only 30 per cent of teachers holding Certificate VI are female. Certificate VI identifies a post-graduate degree (masters or doctorate), which is a requirement for many of the more senior administrative positions. In addition, there is a need to make more educational leadership development opportunities accessible to female teachers. The training initiatives sponsored by the Department of Education and the Minister's Advisory Committees on Women's Issues have to date provided support for female teachers to become prepared to move into administrative positions, but more is needed.

30. It is therefore recommended that appropriate measures be taken to ensure that

1. **the curriculum and pedagogical materials used in the schools are stereotype-free and present a positive image of women's role in and contribution to society;**
2. **appropriate guidance and career counselling is available to female learners to influence their course selection and nurture their interest for a wide choice of career options, including and particularly careers in applied sciences;**
3. **collaboration exists between the Department of Education and the teachers' associations for the implementation of a strategy aimed at preparing female teachers to assume management and administrative positions.**

Aboriginal Education

In the early 1950s, the provincial government, in conjunction with the Department of Indian Affairs, introduced a policy of integrating Aboriginal students into the provincial school system. A general tuition agreement was signed by the two parties providing for the payment of a fixed tuition amount for each Aboriginal child attending provincial schools. As a result of this agreement between the Department of Indian Affairs and the Department of Education, a significant number of Maliseet and Micmac students attend provincial schools in New Brunswick. In 1990-91, 1200 students were registered in provincial schools, and this resulted in a transfer of $5.2 million to the province.

In 1990, the Department of Education engaged Professor W. D. Hamilton of the University of New Brunswick to prepare a report on Aboriginal student achievement in the provincial school system. The final report of the study, entitled "Closing the Gap," paints a depressing and gloomy picture of Aboriginal education in New Brunswick. The findings would seem to suggest that the educational system has failed to provide or demonstrate equality of opportunity to all members of our pluralistic society. By any measure, achievement levels between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students demonstrate an unacceptable gap.

Among its conclusions, the study found that a typical Aboriginal student arrives at Grade 10 nearly a year later than his or her non-Aboriginal counterpart; that most Aboriginal students select general, vocational, or practical high school programs (level 3 and 4 under the semestering system); that a significant number of Aboriginal students feel unwanted, neglected, or discriminated against in the public schools; and, finally, that Maliseet and Micmac students have the highest dropout rate in the province.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Commission has not received significant input on the place of Aboriginal students in the provincial educational system. The recent move to establish schools on reserves is certainly a reaction to the failure of the public school system to respond effectively to the special needs of students of native ancestry. Nevertheless, we are convinced that improvement of Aboriginal education can occur and are encouraged by recent developments in the Department of Education in this regard. In 1991, the Minister of Education released a Policy Statement which provided direction on the development of Aboriginal education in New Brunswick. Nine principles were adopted by the Department in the development of education programs for and about Maliseet and Micmac peoples. These principles have to do with partnerships in the education system, recognition of cultural diversity, the establishment of goals to meet student needs, and the accurate reflection of aboriginal peoples in all curriculum materials.

In recognition of the recent steps taken by the Department, the Commission supports the full implementation of the Policy Statement on Aboriginal Education and calls on the Department of Education to publicly report from time to time on its implementation.

31. The Commission, recognizing the need for role models for Aboriginal students, recommends that high priority be placed on the training and employment of Aboriginal teachers in the public schools of the province. Emphasis should be given to recruiting such teachers for schools with significant Aboriginal student populations. On a broader level, the Commission also recommends that the Department ensure that all curriculum materials present Aboriginal people accurately in historical and contemporary terms.

(VI) SPECIAL ISSUES

In the past five months, the Commission has received a great deal of information on specific curriculum issues. It would not be incorrect to suggest that virtually every aspect of public school curriculum in New Brunswick has been commented upon. Given the enormity of our task, it has not been possible in this report to respond to all of the issues that have been raised.

In the section which follows, we discuss a number of subject areas which, we feel, are particularly germane to the focus of our curriculum. A number of these were raised in Issues Paper I; others have emerged over the course of our work as requiring emphasis or reinforcement. We hasten to add that the omission of comment upon some other important curriculum issues implies no judgment upon the quality of work being done in those areas. Even in a report as long as this one, choices had to be made.

We have included a discussion on extra- and co-curricular activities in this section. Our perspective is that these activities form an essential component of the educational process. We believe that such activities have significant potential for stimulating interest and achievement among students, and provide opportunities for curriculum enhancement. We note, in particular, the development of summer camps, workshops, and institutes, and see these as providing effective educational experiences to students who have special interests and needs.

Mathematics, Science, and Technology

In Issues Paper I, we observed the generally disappointing performance of Canadian students in international achievement tests. This point has been accentuated in a report of the Economic Council just released, entitled A Lot to Learn: "International test results for science and mathematics show that Canadian students in Grade 4 perform at least at the international average; by Grade 8, they are outperformed by students in many other countries; and by the end of secondary school, Canadian results are poor." More distressing for New Brunswick is the fact that, in science at least, we do not compare well even with other provinces, especially British Columbia and Alberta.

In our issues paper, we suggested four possible areas for action: teacher education; increasing the number of females taking mathematical sciences; lengthening the school year; and creating business-education partnerships.

This report provides considerable commentary in various parts on these four areas of action, as well as on the question of evaluation and performance in mathematics, science, and other disciplines. We have also recommended strengthening the high school requirements in mathematics and science. We continue to believe that action must be taken on a number of fronts if we are to remedy what appears to be a very weak showing in two of the most important areas of fundamental human knowledge. We were encouraged through our consultations to discover how many educators share our concern and are attempting to effect a change.

At the moment there, is considerable discussion, here in Canada and elsewhere, about the content and focus of mathematics, science, and technology curricula as the level of competence expected of individuals continues to rise. A recent OECD Paper observed that

> *technological changes, especially in the means of production, have raised the skill levels needed for employment and transformed the structure and management of organizations. The dramatic rate at which change is taking place has made the notion of job permanence obsolete. The emphasis has moved toward educational outcomes such as transferable skills, adaptability, positive attitudes to change, the ability to communicate, desirable personal and interpersonal qualities and problem solving capabilities. One consequence is that science and mathematics curricula are increasingly incorporating practical applications and implications, as well as establishing cross curricular links with each other and with other subjects.*

In New Brunswick, attempts are being made to shift the learning of mathematics and science from a process of passive absorption of information to a more meaningful intellectual and physical engagement with the concepts and properties of these subjects. Students appear to be responding with increased interest to hands-on activities in the doing and making of science and mathematics. Such movement, however, is slow in occurring, and while some success is evident in the new mathematics curricula, science courses, particularly at the high school level, continue to be content-driven and teacher-centered.

Evolving technologies, growing as they often do out of scientific and mathematical fields, continue to change the nature of the mathematics and science that students must learn. New technology not only makes calculations and graphing easier, it has changed the very nature of the problems important to mathematics and science and the methods used to investigate them. The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) in Curriculum and Evaluation Standards (1989) recommends that

(1) **appropriate calculators should be available to all students at all times;**

(2) **a computer should be available in every class for demonstration purposes;**

(3) **students should have access to computers for individual and group work;**

(4) **students should learn to use the computer as a tool for processing information and performing calculations to investigate and solve problems.**

These statements are supported by the Science Council of Canada.

The Commission is aware of the priority which the Department of Education and a number of districts have placed on improving the content and outcomes of mathematics, science, and technology education. It is the Commission's view that effective learning takes place in a classroom where students can actively participate in the process of their own learning. To this end, we believe that continued revision of the science and mathematics curricula is warranted.

Enterprise Education

> *From coast to coast high school students are learning first-hand what business is all about. These teenagers capitalize, operate, and finally liquidate their own small companies. Each company forms their own board of directors, work force and sales staff. The young people elect officers and decide on a product to sell, or a service to offer. Experiencing a company's operation from start to finish gives students "real world" awareness of the business system. (Extract from Junior Achievement's economic education programs)*

Carrying through on its commitment to pursue the development of entrepreneurs in the region, in 1988 ACOA agreed to support a joint study by the education faculties of Mount Allison University and L'Université de Moncton on entrepreneurship and the contemporary school curriculum. The results of this study, which were published in 1990, provide an in-depth profile of the current status of entrepreneurship education in Atlantic Canada, as well as recommendations on remedial measures to guide the direction of curriculum development. This study, termed Projet Entrepreneurship Project (PEP), should be viewed as a significant benchmark in the development of future directions for entrepreneurship and enterprise education in secondary and post-secondary studies.

PEP clearly noted the great diversity of definition and understanding that has followed the development of entrepreneurship as a topic or field of study in our public schools. Difficulty in definition has led to the development of a wide variety of models that attempt to illustrate how educators might give order to curriculum and materials that cut across school levels. The broad model described by PEP attests to the complexity of the task and presents a plan of action to address it. It also verifies that textbook teaching of entrepreneurship is not likely to be effectual. The goal has to be the creation of an entrepreneurial culture, which can only be accomplished through an interrelated, interdisciplinary group of activities. The terms "enterprise education" and "entrepreneurship" tend to be used interchangeably. Enterprise education would seem the better and broader term. It includes all the initiatives undertaken to inform students about entrepreneurs, to make them aware of entrepreneurial careers, and to develop the life skills of communication, inter-personal relations, critical and creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, and management. Enterprise education places emphasis during the early school years on developing attitudes, values, and the personal qualities which equip young people to reach their full potential, no matter what career paths they may choose.

A review of the curriculum in New Brunswick schools indicates that enterprise education is slowly being incorporated throughout the system. Although initial concepts are introduced in elementary grades, the technology programs in junior high and a number of options in senior high provide stronger focus on the subject. It must be emphasized that the promotion of enterprise education through the school system requires not only a new focus in the curriculum but also, and more importantly, an examination of how educators interact among themselves and with students in order to nurture an enterprising spirit. Teaching methods which promote control and foster dependence will not do much to enhance the spirit of enterprise, even if that is the subject being taught.

The Commission supports the directions which have been established for enterprise education. We view the revaluation of teaching methods as consistent with emphasis on co-operative learning and similar teaching strategies discussed earlier. We also note the recent establishment of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Entrepreneurship and the strong private sector membership on that Committee. In the final analysis, the relationship between schools and the private sector are of paramount importance if enterprise education is to have the desired impact. We attach particular value to the formation of partnerships at the local school or district level, and we endorse wholeheartedly the Junior Achievers program.

The Arts

> *In these difficult times, as change swirls around us, as we search for new ways of coping with these changes, as we try to find ways of helping our children prepare for a future only vaguely revealed to us, we must give them the means by which they can restore and maintain their inner selves.*
>
> *We must give them the ears to hear the intricacies of Bach and Oscar Peterson, and the cadence of an actor's voice. We must give them the opportunity to experience the joy and satisfaction of making art: creating a painting, acting on a stage. (Brief from the New Brunswick Arts Board)*

We are grateful for and encouraged by the significant and diverse range of comments which we have received from New Brunswickers on the value and role of arts education in the province. Some viewed the lack of specific notation of the arts in the first issues paper as an indication that the Commission did not value the contribution of arts education and activities to New Brunswick schools.

Others reflected upon the many benefits of education in the arts, including the impact on learning styles, fostering creativity, innovation, and tolerance of other cultures and values, and the development of self-esteem and self-discipline which are applicable to the full school experience. A number of briefs also pointed out the economic value the arts play in today's world and drew attention to the ways in which arts education complements studies in mathematics, science, and technology.

The Commission wholeheartedly accepts the view that Arts education is an essential part of the education of children. We take the broad support for this position as a positive sign of the vibrancy and strength of the arts community within our schools and our province. We concur with sentiments expressed by a respondent:

> *The Arts are not frills, they are fundamental. They can put our students in touch with modern culture, they can tap our unique Maritime experience of beauty and design and rhythm, and enable us to communicate our special insights to the world. They can also make us believe in ourselves and develop the capacity for adventure and risk-taking that our province so desperately needs.*

Interest in music, art, and theatre arts programs in New Brunswick schools is, we are told by teachers, on the upswing. At one major high school, enrolment has increased three hundred per cent in recent years, so that one out of every three students now has programmed contact with the arts during the year. Semestering, which increases available options, has facilitated this interest. These developments in the high schools should be fostered also at the elementary and junior high levels. The extra- and co-curricular aspects of arts programs also need to be encouraged. The Commission, in recognition of the need for a curriculum responsive to the needs of the whole child, has included the arts as a core-subject area. We are satisfied that the implementation of this recommendation will ensure that the arts continue to play a prominent role in the education of our children.

Language

Language Arts

In language arts (instruction in the first language), it would appear that more time should be devoted to its teaching and mastery. As well, more rigorous demands should be made to develop good communication skills, and especially writing, across the curriculum, and not just by language arts teachers.

In the teaching of first language, two traditions or schools of thought predominate. One, sometimes referred to as the experiential approach, is based on the belief that children learn language primarily by using it; that is, by listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The other takes the view that language learning results mainly from formalized, structured instruction.

This appears to the Commission to be one of a number of false dichotomies that operate in educational theory, and we have no wish to arbitrate the issue. There are, we would argue, a number of reliable assumptions which should inform every, and does indeed inform many, language arts programs:

1. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are interrelated in practice and should therefore be integrated instructionally.

2. Whatever instructional approach is taken will require intellectual rigour on the part of teacher and student, for both the rules of grammar and rhetoric and the requirements of clear expression demand it.

3. Language growth will not occur, and language skills will not be developed, without regular and guided use and practice.

4. Language communication requires the ability to adapt its use to many different social and rhetorical situations. It follows, therefore, that such practice, especially in writing, must be varied.

5. Children communicate best when there is a personal wish to communicate. Assignments should stimulate and challenge personal involvement. Speaking, reading, or writing, without motivation or purpose, but simply to exercise skills, is not likely to be productive.

6. Language growth is a continual process, and occurs in response to progressively more mature or more sophisticated communicational requirements.

These assumptions have two major implications for curriculum:

1. First-language instruction should be a major priority of curriculum at every grade level, including in senior high school.

2. First language instruction should be regarded as a responsibility to be shared by all teachers across the entire curriculum.

The Commission has made recommendations earlier in this chapter relating to the first implication. We wish to reinforce the second, particularly in the middle and senior high grades: first-language teachers should work closely with their colleagues to plan a program of speaking, reading, and writing activities for all students.

Second Language

As the only officially bilingual province in Canada, it is imperative that New Brunswick not only set high second-language objectives but establish mechanisms to ensure that these objectives are being met. This means setting higher standards of proficiency in the second language and developing the necessary measurements to assess progress.

Many parents in this province feel that the school system is supposed to make their children proficient in the second language. Unfortunately, for reasons that are as much social as educational, we are falling seriously short of this mark, at least in the anglophone schools. While the realities of North American life provide more practical need and opportunities to learn English as a second language, it remains true that young New Brunswickers have greater need than ever of proficiency in two or more languages.

It is the view of the Commission that New Brunswick should make extra efforts to show that its bilingual and bi-cultural nature are such that second language proficiency is not just an asset for some but a reality for all students. Integrating a number of complementary activities related to second language acquisition could be a boon in this regard; for example, camps, visits, exchanges, computer-assisted learning should be built upon and expanded. In our view, however, the best way of demonstrating the value we attach to second-language learning is to measure its acquisition through provincial examinations.

Extra- and Co-Curricular Activities

It is clear that activities organized at or by the school outside the regular classroom program are a valuable means of expanding a student's opportunities for enjoyment, achievement, and skill- development. In the case of co-curricular activities, what greater way to learn about government than to visit the Legislative Assembly or attend a meeting of local council; what better way to understand the challenges of marine biology than to visit the Huntsman Marine Institute in St. Andrew's or the Centre Marine in Shippagan? For many students, extra-curricular activities are an essential and the most enjoyable part of their school-learning experience.

Like the quality of such activities, the quantity is impressive. In a letter to the Commission, the President of the Fredericton Music Festival noted that over 7000 students are expected to participate in the 1992 Festival. In the 1992 provincial Drama Festival, over 1055 students from 49 junior and senior high schools are registered to participate.

Such activities, even with the significant role they play, are not without their problems. They are, for example, almost universally supported by the volunteer efforts of teachers, parents, and others. During periods of difficult contract negotiations between the government and teachers, they have have sometimes been seriously disrupted, with all the frustration and disappointment that entails. Budget allocations for extra- and co-curricular activities are either minimal or, in some cases, non-existent. Concerns have also been expressed about too broad an interpretation of what constitutes co-curricular activities. Finally, limitations on participation because of bussing schedules are also of concern.

The Commission strongly endorses extra- and co-curricular activities as essential components of the educational process. It is clear that they are a major supplement to the regular curricular experiences of thousands of students.

> **32. We recommend that the Department of Education review the current financial and program provisions relating to extra- and co-curricular activities, and seek partnerships with the private sector, foundations, and others to enhance such activities.**

(VII) LENGTH OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

As we had anticipated, no issue raised by the Commission engendered more intense discussion than the length of the school year. The response from teachers was emphatically negative. Conditions in our public schools, it was averred time and again, are such that, by the end of the current school year, teachers and students are in dire need of a holiday from each other.

Nor were teachers any more receptive to the idea of restructuring the present school year in order to shorten the long (and, some believe, pedagogically harmful) summer holiday in favour of longer breaks at other times of the year. For many teachers, it would seem that the long summer recess is a crucially important feature of a profession that in many other respects has become more stressful and less attractive.

In general, and overwhelmingly, teachers felt that the present school year was about the right length, but that better use could be made of the time provided.

Among parents, school trustees, business people, superintendents, and students opinion was more diverse. Some shared the views of the teachers; others felt that it was unwise and even presumptuous of us to think that we in New Brunswick can accomplish in 182 days of instruction what people in some other developed nations are requiring 200 days or more to achieve. Again, all were agreed that a first priority was to make better use of whatever time was decided upon.

The issue is not only an emotional one, it is also complex. There is now an extensive literature on the subject—most of it emanating from the United States where, especially in California and Utah, year-round schooling models have been in effect for some time. The assessment to date is generally positive, but it should be observed that some of the salient circumstances which contribute to the necessity for and success of these experiments are not present in New Brunswick. (Some experimentation is also taking place in Ontario, but, again, the demographic and social dynamics are different, and it is much too early to draw conclusions.)

There is no doubt that the most important aspect of this issue is putting to more effective use the time available, however many days of instruction are decided upon. It is our belief that, if implemented as intended, the recommendations of this report will assist materially in achieving this objective. There remains, however, the question raised in Issues Paper I of whether, given the increase in the sophistication of knowledge and skills our students are expected to master, 182 days are enough. British Columbia and Alberta, both of whom have recently undergone major reviews of their education systems, have passed legislation requiring school boards to offer a minimum of 190 days of instruction. As things stand, only Quebec among Canadian provinces has as short a school year as New Brunswick.

And, indeed, the instructional school year in New Brunswick is, in practice, a good deal shorter than 182 days. A survey of semestered schools carried out by the Department of Education for 1990-91 revealed that, when adjusted for examination schedules, turnaround time between semesters, PD days during semester, inclement weather, and 'other,' the actual number of days of instruction ranged from a low of 150 to a high of 175, with the average being 161. Almost everyone agrees that this is unsatisfactory.

The erosion of the school year, and the range of that erosion among schools, suggest there is insufficient discipline in the administration of current policy. For this, all of the custodians of the system (the Department of Education, the school boards, the principals and teachers) must accept some responsibility. Our consultations have led us to believe that a more explicit and rigorous school-year policy would be generally welcomed.

33. We would therefore recommend that the following statement be adopted:

1. The school year will constitute 200 days, of which a minimum of 190 days of instruction will be scheduled by each board in every school in each school year.

2. The school year in New Brunswick may not begin before the third week of August and may not end later than June 30. Within these dates each school board will determine when the school year within its jurisdiction will begin and end. Every effort should be made to have the instructional year begin after Labour Day.

3. Administrative days, professional development days, storm days, marking days, parent-teacher days, and semester turnaround days will not count as instructional days.

4. The organization of the instructional year will be designed to ensure minimum disruption during the year because of professional development, in-service, civic or provincial elections, union meetings, etc.

5. The Department and Districts will review the structure and scheduling of the high school semesters to determine the feasibility of completing the first semester to coincide with the Christmas Break.

This proposal, we believe, will allow for flexibility where it is needed to begin the school year early (such as in farming regions), protect a long summer break for teachers and students, and provide for almost a full year more of instruction over twelve years of schooling.

(VIII) CLASS SIZE

In Canada as a whole, the number of students in the public school system increased from about 4 million in 1960 to a peak of 5.65 million in 1970-71. Since then the number has declined steadily. Whereas one in four Canadians was in school in the early 70s, now it is less than one in five. The number of teachers also grew commensurately in the 1960s but declined only marginally during the 70s and 80s. In New Brunswick, the student/teacher ratio has dropped from 26 students per teacher to slightly more than 16, a decline of 35 per cent.

It is anticipated that, given demographic trends, this reduction in the student/teacher ratio will continue for some time. Projected enrolment data indicate a further reduction of 10,000 students over the next seven years, a trend that will likely persist into the early years of the 21st century. This would suggest that student/teacher ratios will continue to come down, but more slowly than in the past twenty years.

It is apparent that much progress has been made in reducing the average size of classes over the past generation. There would seem, however, to be a renewed interest among educators and parents in lowering it further. Many of the representations made by teachers stressed the need for smaller classes, particularly in light of the challenges posed by integration and a more inclusive philosophy of education generally. The research on the correlation between reduced class size and student achievement is far from conclusive, but the more recent studies carried out in the United States lend support to the view that there are sound educational reasons to strive for smaller classes, with the correlation being most positive at the primary level.

A number of other important factors emerge from the research:

1. The cost of lowering class size is considerable and would, in the present circumstances, require a major re-allocation of scarce funds with a corresponding shift in school priorities.

2. Unless the lowering of class size is accompanied by extensive and ongoing teacher training to alter teaching strategies, the potential benefits will not be realized.

3. There is no "ideal" class size, since subject being taught, teaching style, grade level, and physical environment are important variables.

4. To be successful, a planned reduction in class size will have to take into account the effects, as well as the costs, of implementation, including those upon collective bargaining, availability of classrooms, teacher training, and the evaluation of the effectiveness of the program being addressed in this way.

Given such factors as the number of teachers serving in administrative positions or as resource or guidance personnel, which vary across jurisdictions, class size does not correspond exactly with student/teacher ratio. It would seem, however, from a recent Canada-wide survey (see appendix) that average class size in New Brunswick is at or slightly below that of other provinces at all levels (elementary, junior high, and high school). Indeed, there would appear to be greater variation in class size among schools and school districts within New Brunswick. Larger schools and districts tend to have higher student-teacher ratios and many more large classes. The reasons for this are generally understood but are not always happily accepted by those with larger classes. (On the other hand, teachers in the small senior high schools believe that their workloads are heavier because they generally have more preparations.) There is also considerable variation among subject areas, which also gives rise to complaints about perceived lack of equity.

It seems clear to the Commission that the issue of equity of workloads within the province is a matter for ongoing analysis and discussion among the teachers, school boards, and the Department of Education. On the larger issue,

> **34. the Commission views some further lowering of class size as a desirable long-term objective, to be implemented when there are more resources available for education than is the case just now. In the short run, it would be best to concentrate efforts and whatever modest funds there may be for this purpose on the elementary school, especially at the primary level, where both research and common sense predict a greater return on investment.**

CHAPTER V:

Partnership

In the preceding three chapters, we have discussed many important issues affecting teaching and learning. We have tried to keep students and teachers constantly in our sights because we believe that it is finally what happens in the classroom that makes the greatest difference to the quality and character of education.

There are of course other important, and potentially very important, players on the field of education whose contributions can make the difference between winning and losing. They include parents; trustees; community, business, and labour leaders; the universities; educational associations; various government agencies; and the many fine professionals who constitute the Department of Education. In ways too intricate to describe, they lend support to our schools. For various reasons, however, they do not always provide effective or well-orchestrated support. Who is responsible for this is less important than what might be done to mobilize better the impressive array of resources they do or can bring to bear on the challenges our schools face.

In the course of its consultations, the Commission heard repeatedly that "schools cannot be all things to all people" and that "schools cannot do it alone." We also heard from parents and some others that they would like to be allowed to participate more in the education system.

A consensus seems to be emerging here in New Brunswick as elsewhere: in order for the public school system to fulfil its mandate, education has to be a societal project through which many groups forge alliances to create the common cause and provide the human and material resources that are necessary. Such resources are also needed to free teachers, whose primary focus should be upon educational goals, from many of the custodial and social responsibilities which they have had to assume over the years.

Effective partnership is as much a matter of spirit as of structure. It implies a shared sense of purpose and a relationship based on trust, mutual respect, and co-operation. More important than any partners' meeting is the meeting of the partners' minds.

Effective partnerships in education pose challenges to the formal educational leadership provided by the Department of Education and the school boards, as well as to the teaching personnel, for it strengthens the horizontal axis of authority at the expense of the vertical. It favours the strengthening of the linkages and the broader sharing of responsibilities. It requires, on the part of teachers, the willingness to work co-operatively with parents and the community at large, and to give the students a greater voice in their education. Conversely, it requires students, parents, the community, business, and labour to assume a greater share of responsibility for the public education system. The essence of the challenge of partnership in this sense is well captured in the brief submitted by l'AEFNB:

> *Education, by its nature, requires partnerships, of which we do not have enough at present. It will not be easy for us to subordinate our individual interests to a common cause, but do it we must, otherwise we will pay the price in the long run.*

Fortunately, New Brunswick does not have to start from scratch in building educational partnerships. Many strategic alliances already exist between parents and schools, mainly through the Home and School Association and les Comités de parents; between the school boards and the population they represent; between businesses and the schools, through the stay-in-school strategies and co-operative education programs; and between the provincial and federal governments, through a variety of youth development initiatives. There is, however, little consistency in either the degree of involvement of the partners in the schools, or in the degree of their acceptance by the school system. Except in the most high-profile joint ventures, the non-educational partners are, for the most part, the silent partners.

It is the Commission's view that excellence in education in a new century will require the focus, energy, resources, and commitment, not only of the many fine professionals in our school system, but of all New Brunswickers who set a high value on the quality of public education and who wish to lend support.

Because it believes that effective partnerships are not simply a matter of structure but also of attitude, the Commission does not wish to be needlessly prescriptive about the composition, the methods of operation, or the structure of such partnerships. In light of what we have heard, however, we wish to illustrate the kinds of partnerships that are needed, and indicate how they might function.

(I) STUDENTS AS PARTNERS

We begin the list of possible and desirable partnerships with students because, in a system that is both learner-centred and outcome-oriented, students, especially as they pass from childhood to young adulthood, must be seen and treated as partners in an enterprise where they have the most to gain or lose. Some students have always known this; others need to be invited and encouraged to think of themselves in this way.

On the basis of what we heard from students through the consultation process, and especially at the student forum, the Commission believes that many students, at the high school level particularly, are desirous and ready to assume more responsibility in the management of their educational affairs. While the sample of student opinion was far from scientific, the message was unequivocal: students want to be active participants; they want to be able to voice their opinions concerning what and how they are taught—not to dictate, but to make suggestions about how education could be more relevant and enjoyable.

As we have indicated in our endorsement of co-operative approaches to teaching and learning, the Commission supports the students' request for a greater involvement, not simply as a matter of right, but because students need to take greater responsibility for their own education, in a manner commensurate with their age and level of schooling.

> **35. It is therefore recommended that the Department of Education assist the school boards in the elaboration of policies and procedures for the meaningful participation of students in the operation of their schools.**

(II) PARENTS-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

There has been a rediscovery of late, among educators and others, of the pivotal role parents can play in the academic success of their children. The message received by the Commission is two-fold: parents must assume greater responsibility for the education of their children, and the system must be more hospitable to parents who wish to play this role.

There is some encouraging evidence that the schools, for their part, are coming to the same conclusions. In a recent NBTA survey, teachers overwhelmingly affirmed their belief that positive parental involvement improves classroom discipline and enhances student learning. "The research on this is clear. Parental involvement promotes reduced absenteeism, higher academic scores, improved student behaviour, restored confidence and participation among parents, greater parent support and communication with the school, greater parent participation in children's learning and development," to quote from the report of the NBTA Task Force on Excellence in Education. This view is shared by l'AEFNB.

Of equal importance are the suggestions made by both teachers' associations to assist parents in becoming more active partners. L'AEFNB, for instance, recommends "a special education program for parents, to make them aware of the importance of their commitment to the education of their children."

But while a consensus seems to be forming that parents should be more involved in the education of their children, many parents do not feel that their participation is welcomed by the school; others simply do not know how they might be more helpful to their children and the school.

The concept of school advisory committees, recently put forward by the Minister of Education, would appear to open the door for increased community involvement. On the other hand, there is concern on the part of existing parents organizations (namely, the New Brunswick Home and School Association and les Comités de parents du Nouveau-Brunswick) that the introductionof a new structure could deprive them of, or duplicate, their role.

In addition to parents, there is, we perceive, a steadily increasing number of potential volunteers—retirees, business people, and other community-spirited citizens—willing to invest some of their time, experience, and talent in schools, if they were invited to do so and shown how.

The Commission believes that further consultation is needed between the Department of Education, the school boards, les Comités de parents du Nouveau-Brunswick, and the New Brunswick Home and School Association, in order to devise an appropriate structure which would facilitate greater and more purposeful parental and community involvement in the schools. It further believes that, to ensure consistency and effectiveness throughout the province, the structure agreed upon should be formalized through legislation. The legislation should provide specifically that parents have the right and responsibility to participate in the process of determining the educational goals, policies, and services provided for their children, and that parents have the primary responsibility of ensuring that children are provided with a home environment conducive to learning.

The duties and responsibilities of such advisory committees could include matters such as participation in the establishment of goals for the school; discussion and advice on curriculum, school regulations, discipline, and the community use of the school; liaison with the community, school boards, and government; and the training of volunteers wishing to work in the schools.

The Commission believes that many tasks within the school can be performed by competent and caring parents and volunteers, including some of the individualized help students need. In addition, volunteers could perform routine supervisory tasks or assist teachers by reading aloud to young children, tutoring, mentoring, counselling, coaching, or supervising during recreation. A comprehensive volunteer program might include a process of accreditation by the school boards of volunteers wishing to work in the schools, the development of a volunteer manual, and appropriate non-monetary recognition for volunteers.

> **36. The Commission therefore recommends that, following consultation with the school boards, the New Brunswick Home and School Association, and Le Comité de Parents du Nouveau-Brunswick, school advisory committees be prescribed by legislation for each school, and that the Department of Education, also in consultation, develop guidelines for the participation of volunteers in the schools.**

(III) BUSINESS AND EDUCATION AS PARTNERS

The schools have a key role in encouraging entrepreneurial behaviour and spirit through the school's core education mission, which includes the teaching of the skills of problem-solving, decision-making, communications, and leadership. There exists, however, a growing sentiment that there is a legitimate role for business and entrepreneurial activities in the public school system.

Support for the involvement of business and industry in education by parents, teachers, employers, and government is evidenced, in particular, by efforts to blend work experience and academic programs through co-operative education, work orientation workshops, as well as through participation in entrepreneurship courses.

Business-education partnerships play an important role in the strategies to enhance school retention and assist students in making the transition from school to work. They are also excellent motivators for students who perform well academically, giving them a taste of the workplace as they begin to think about future careers.

New Brunswick business participation in education is faring reasonably well and is on the increase, as the list of innovative projects in Appendix F attests. The degree of collaboration between business and the schools varies among schools and school districts, as it does between the francophone and anglophone sectors of the education system. The latter seems at present much more open to the involvement of business and industry. Co-operative education was experimented with in anglophone schools as early as 1977 and is now an option course carrying two high school credits and available to students at all academic levels.

The Commission is encouraged by the formation of the New Brunswick Co-operative Teachers Association. The determination and enthusiasm which animates the leaders and members of that association, which was formed through the initiative of teachers at the school level, is a good example of the kind of teacher initiative and empowerment which we believe education for a new century requires.

The Commission has found a definite desire on the part of employers and labour to get involved in those aspects of education where their experience could be beneficial. We fear, however, that this interest will dissipate unless it is given more formal and predictable means of expression. At present, business is invited to act in an advisory capacity to the Department of Education, to sponsor specific local projects, to participate in a more or less ad hoc fashion in the teaching of entrepreneurship, and to participate in work placement programs. It is also, of course, and most creditably, actively involved in New Brunswick's highly successful Junior Achievement program. These are all important contributions, and the Commission applauds all those who are making the various forms of business-education partnership work. It is important, however, to take full advantage of the present hospitable climate to such connections by creating firm but flexible structures to provide for their continuation and enhancement.

37. To promote sustained province-wide participation of the private sector in the public school system, and to ensure the quality and consistency of the formal activities sponsored, the Commission recommends the creation of a provincial educational collective or compact (which might be called EduCom N.B.)

The entity we envisage would not be responsible for delivering programs or running projects. It would act as a think tank for the elaboration and dissemination province-wide of work and technology-related programs and projects, and as a clearing house for information and ideas concerning such activities. This vehicle could also be used to secure financial and human resources to assist the school system in the provision of information and/or computer technology on work-related education, as well as to furnish teachers with opportunities to gain experience in the private sector or to enhance their knowledge of current technology.

The membership would be compsed of representatives of the schools (students, teachers, administrators), organizations (such as the Chambers of Commerce, Junior Achievement, the National Entrepreneurship Development Institute, the Co-operative Movement, le Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick), the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Employment and Immigration Canada, the Departments of Education and Advanced Education and Labour, the New Brunswick Co-operative Teachers' Association, school boards, business, and labour.

The report just released by the Economic Council of Canada is critical of Canada's educational system, and especially of its failure to link as effectively as some other nations have done the world of school to the world of work. The Commission believes that we in New Brunswick can, if we have the co-operative will, set the pace in this area. We are small and cohesive enough as a society to make the mobilization of partnerships spoken of above practicable; we are large enough to find the resources necessary to make it work.

(IV) GOVERNMENTS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AS PARTNERS

Government has for so long been almost the sole patron of education that the notion of government-as-partner may seem rather odd. Yet it is clear that government, while it will always be the senior partner with controlling interest in public education, cannot any longer deliver on its own an efficient and effective system of education, as much because of limited know-how as limited resources.

(a) Governments as Partners:

To advocate a role for the federal government in our provincial education system may seem to smack of heresy at a time when all the constitutional tides appear to be flowing in the opposite direction. New Brunswick subscribes fully, as we believe it should, to provincial jurisdiction over education and training. This has not, however, prevented the province in the past from seeking and encouraging the involvement of the federal government in post-secondary education and technical training through the Established Programs Financing Act, direct grants to universities for research and development, as well as the purchase of seats at the community colleges. The province has also benefited, and continues to benefit, from federal funding for second language education and from innovative education and training cost-sharing agreements, such as the Youth Strategy, with its effective stay-in-school component.

It is against this background that the Commission has come to the conclusion that the Prosperity Initiative, recently launched by the federal government, of which lifelong learning is a cornerstone, may provide an opportunity for renewed and enhanced co-operation between the two levels of government.

The most timely and appropriate contributions the federal government could make to New Brunswick's school system, in the view of this Commission, would be (a) to renew and expand the stay-in-school program agreement, which is due to expire next year, and (b) to assist in the equipping of our schools with state-of-the-art computer and instructional technology. Both these represent appropriate forms of partnership for the federal government, inasmuch as they are intended to strengthen the skills which lead to greater self-sufficiency for young Canadians living in a province which must rely increasingly for its own self-sufficiency on the intellectual and technical competencies of its people.

> **38. The Commission therefore recommends that the province pursue negotiations with the federal government with a view to securing a long-term commitment to enhance the stay-in-school initiatives and to providing state-of-the-art technology throughout our public school system.**

(b) Governmental Agencies as Partners:

The Commission has been told that the expanded social role of the school necessitates not only additional non-instructional support services but better co-ordination of the existing ones.

As it stands, some of these services are delivered by the Department of Education, while those provided by the health professionals and social workers fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health and Community Services. This, it was said, often creates frustrations and inefficiencies. There is some support for the concentration of all such services under the Department of Education, but, as can be expected, not everybody agrees that this would be best.

The Commission senses, however, that the real concern is not about bureaucratic structure: it is about the children and the meeting of their needs. We were particularly impressed by the model proposed by the NBSTA which would establish the school as the locus for the delivery of social services to the children. Under its proposal, the School Trustees' Association envisaged

> *a coalition or a compact of individuals and groups spearheaded by the schools, to work together as advocates on behalf of the children. Schools in effect would become community centres linking a host of family support services to deal with the social, psychological and health problems of children and their parents. . . . Making schools the locus of delivery of services to children would require the designation of a person in each district with authority and persuasive abilities to co-ordinate medical, mental health, social and other services for children and entire families, with the school as a focal of preventive service delivery.*

The Commission shares the view that in many instances the needs of the children cannot be addressed in isolation. The causal root of their problems often lies in their home life, and a holistic approach is needed.

As things now stand, many of the children in need come from families who are already beneficiaries of one form or other of social services. What appears to be needed is a more co-ordinated and systematic approach to the provision of those services. The Commission believes that this can be accomplished without a restructuring of government agencies.

> **39. We would recommend, building on initiatives already begun, the development of formal inter-departmental protocols that clearly spell out the roles and responsibilities of each agency.**

To ensure responsiveness of such protocols to local needs, the Commission envisages that they would be signed at both the local and central levels. At the central level, umbrella protocols would spell out the responsibilities and resource commitment of each department; at the local level, the parties to the protocol would include the agencies concerned and the school board, with roles and responsibilities being tailored to the local circumstances.

The Commission has heard a similar plea for a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to the delivery of other services which require resources that are beyond the capacity of the school system to provide on its own, and which we feel might be effectively addressed through this model. Four such areas are (a) school health programs and services, (b) sports and recreation programs, (c) cultural programs, and (d) community use of schools.

The school health program consists of (1) school health instruction, which is compulsory from kindergarten to grade nine and elective thereafter, and which includes a wide variety of topics of the physical, mental and emotional, social and family health, safety and first aid kinds; (2) school health services, which include medical examinations (vision, hearing, etc.), communicable disease control, nutritional services, health counselling, public health nursing visitations, emergency care, etc.; and (3) healthful school living, which includes matters related to the health, comfort and safety as well as the state of repair of the school environment.

The sport and physical recreation programs are made up of (1) unstructured recreational opportunities before school, at recess and noon hour, and after school; (2) intramural sport competitions, usually beginning at grade four or five; (3) interscholastic sport leagues and teams, usually beginning at grade six or seven; (4) school-sponsored special interest clubs and organizations for all ages; and (5) youth and adult fitness, sport and recreation services outside of the regular school day. Activities included in these programs include those of individual and team sport, dance and gymnastics, aquatics, fitness, and outdoor recreation.

Cultural programs include those which assist in the development of a positive attitude towards, an appreciation of, and skill in what John F. Kennedy described as "...the side of life which expresses the emotions and embodies values and ideals of beauty." It is important that these programs reflect the cultural mosaic that is New Brunswick and which may best be perceived through participation in or exposure to painting, pottery, handcrafts, poetry and story writing, theatre, film, the electronic and print media, all forms of dance, voice and instrumental music, and, of course, the customs and values of the many ethnic groups in our society.

Community use of schools. Another matter which has been the subject of much comment to the Commission and which we believe would lend itself to a co-ordinated approach through an inter-departmental protocol is the community use of schools. Although the province has for many years encouraged the community use of school facilities and has, of late, through its major facilities programs encouraged the construction of gymnasia and auditoria for joint use by schools and the community, there are still many impediments to effective, harmonious use. They range from the adequacy of the facilities, the inflexibility of the local administrations and school personnel, to the costs of janitorial services. At a construction cost of more than $1100 per square metre, it seems to make little sense to restrict the use of a public building to six or seven hours each day for fewer than 200 days each year. This is especially true of our network of modern comprehensive high schools and combination junior-senior high schools, many of which have been constructed in the past 20 years.

Although the Department of Education must continue to be the key player in matters relating to the utilization of schools, there is room for better co-ordination among all departments of government, and between the school administration and the community.

It is true that each government department or agency has been established to provide specific services to the citizens of New Brunswick. It is equally true that many of those citizens can be reached through the school system in co-operation with the Department of Education, local school boards, and school administrations and teachers. This is especially so for those living in the towns, villages, and unincorporated areas of New Brunswick where the school, in many cases, may be the only structure that can accommodate community clubs, organizations, and programs.

> **40. It is therefore recommended that formal inter-departmental protocols be entered into for the provision of support services to the learners and their families, as well as for the community use of schools for educational, recreational, and cultural purposes.**

CHAPTER VI:

Leadership

(I) SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The Commission believes that they serve education best in the long run who take the long view. Thus it follows that those who wish to bring about significant beneficial change in our educational system should be prepared to make a long-term commitment.

The education of the young is an immensely complex area of human endeavour, a field of arts rather than sciences, where "proof" of the superiority of one organizational or instructional model over another is more a matter of shared conviction than demonstrable fact. The Commissioners do not hold the view that "nothing is either good or bad but thinking makes it so," but we do believe that consensus and commitment are more than usually important in education, and that there can be no lasting change in the way people act without a corresponding change in the way they think.

How then do we break the habit of business-as-usual in our schools? How do we get them to look and feel different for students and teachers and parents? How to we dispel the ghost of indenture that seems to haunt corridors, classrooms, and teachers' lounges alike?

We believe it begins and ends with relations. It begins with teachers seeing students as clients and customers, guiding rather than commanding, directing rather than controlling, listening more carefully to what they have to say and for what they leave unsaid, treating them with respect. It continues with administrators and trustees doing the same for teachers, respecting their professional expertise and judgment, exhibiting concern for their welfare, providing encouragement, support, and, what is often lacking, formal and informal recognition of good work. It includes mutual support between teachers and parents, with the latter being welcomed as partners in their childrens' education. It extends to increasing commerce between schools and the community, giving teachers as well as students meaningful exposure to the world of business, industry, and community service. It culminates in a redefining of the three Rs of social organization: rules, roles, and responsibilities.

This is what it means to truly restructure schools. Changes to the curriculum may be necessary, on-task time adjustments may need to be made, school boards may require reorganizing, new instructional technologies may be necessary, but such things are the tools of educational reform, not the essence. The essence lies in the culture of the schools, and the essence of culture is relations, values, and beliefs. This is why real reform takes time, and long-term commitment

Many things are necessary to the renewal needed by our schools, and we have discussed and made recommendations on some of them in this report, but none is more important than leadership—administrative leadership, instructional leadership, community leadership, political leadership. Leadership derives its legitimacy from an elected or appointed position of authority, but it derives its effectiveness in a democratic society from the integrity, sensitivity, courage, enterprise, and skill of the person who holds the position. Such leadership is always in too short supply everywhere.

But leadership is not confined to those in positions of authority. All of us, at one time or another, in one capacity or another, are in a position to give leadership. This is as true of students as it is of teachers, as it is of principals and superintendents. The teacher who pilots a successful new teaching strategy is giving important instructional leadership. The student who explains to classmates how she solved a difficult mathematics problem is giving intellectual leadership. The principal who seeks to build a collaborative, collegial culture in which innovation is encouraged and rewarded is showing administrative leadership.

There are many kinds and styles of leadership, and there is no general prescription for success. Nevertheless, a couple of principles seem germane:

1) Those chosen to lead must demonstrate moral integrity, intellectual capability, sensitivity, and a sense of adventure if they hope to be effective.

2) In the 1990s, those who follow the leader and who will implement the ideas and programs that bring about change, expect to be involved in the process of decision making.

The leaders that are needed in our schools and classrooms are people who can think for themselves, but seldom act alone. They are people who deliberately blur the distinction between leading and following by doing both, as appropriate. They are people who are continually creating circumstances which encourage leadership potential in others. They are people who do not depend upon systems of authority or symbols of power. They practise participatory leadership.

In this environment, the principal and superintendent have key roles, the former primarily internal and school-centred, the latter external and district-centred. The principal needs to give administrative and instructional leadership, and should be regarded and self-regarded as the school's chief instructional officer. The superintendent, the chief executive officer of the school district, should be the community's chief educational officer as well, since so much of his or her effort must be directed to educating the community about the schools, their needs, challenges, and changing nature.

In all of this, the leadership role of the board is critical. First of all, the board must ensure that only the best people available get appointed to leadership positions. This may mean that the board has to be active in searching out good candidates; it will certainly mean that the decisions made are informed and dispassionate. Having appointed a superintendent or a principal, the board should do all in its power to create the conditions which will maximize the likelihood of that person's becoming a success. Nothing should matter more to boards of trustees than the selection, support, and just evaluation of the educational leaders they appoint.

The Commission believes that, regardless of what happens to the recommendations contained in this report, the decade ahead will be one of very great change to our educational system, as it will be for our other major social institutions. Perhaps the most crucial test will be in the area of leadership: will we be able to produce enough leaders with the right stuff and style to steer us through to a school system that can take the measure of a new century and face its challenges with confidence? Under present retirement arrangements, as many as sixty per cent of current school administrators could retire before the year 2000. This presents both a formidable challenge and an exciting opportunity—a challenge and an opportunity which, we are happy to report, have been identified and are being addressed in New Brunswick.

The best established centre for leadership assessment and development in the Atlantic region exists at the University of New Brunswick in the form of the New Brunswick Centre for Educational Administration. It is a fine example of leadership by partnership, the partners being the Department of Education (which under former Deputy Minister Harvey Malmberg launched the initiative in 1984), the NBTA, the NBSTA, and the University. In the beginning, it carried out research and organized an annual conference on leadership. More recently, however, it has expanded its mandate to include the publication of a quarterly, The NB Administrator, an enriched conference program, leadership development seminars, an annual educational leadership academy, and has become one of only two accredited centres in Canada for the assessment of school leaders through a process developed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. To date, 80 senior administrators have been certified to conduct assessments, and nearly 90 teachers and vice-principals have had their skills evaluated. This centre, together with the Centre en planification de l'éducation at the Université de Moncton, which undertakes educational leadership research for francophone school boards and for the AEFNB, has put New Brunswick at the fore in leadership development. Such centres will need support from all the parties who have played a role in their creation, and especially from school boards which have perhaps the most salient responsibility in this area.

Influenced by what we have heard from many sources, the Commission believes that, especially among recent university graduates, there is a wealth of leadership potential in the New Brunswick teaching profession. What those who aspire to leadership positions will need is, first, encouragement and in-service programs to assess aptitude and develop skills, and, second, opportunities to put their leadership potential to the test that counts—in the schools.

41. For this reason we recommend what many have recommended to us: that all departmental headships, vice-principalships, principalships, and superintendencies become term positions. Those appointed would hold office for a fixed period (we would suggest, for example, three years for a department head and five years for a principal), after which a review of performance would be conducted. Reappointment could occur where there

was mutual satisfaction. Otherwise, the incumbent would be entitled to resume full-time teaching.

This practice has been successfully followed in universities across Canada since the 1960s for comparable positions. As well as permitting more people to explore their leadership potential, and creating greater vertical and horizontal mobility within the administrative ranks of the profession, term appointments can also foster collegiality if, as we believe should be the case, teachers are involved in the process of selection and evaluation of administrators. While the responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness and integrity of such a process rests squarely with the board, representation of teachers on selection and review committees for senior leaders is important to the soundness of the judgments made and support of the people chosen to lead.

(II) THE LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Since the publication of Issues Paper I, the provincial government has carried out a major restructuring of school districts, reducing their number from 42 to 18. While the reduction of operating costs was cited as the most compelling reason, the chance this provides to strengthen the role of school boards in decision making and in providing leadership for the improvement of the province's schools is an equally important—and urgent—objective.

In recent years, school boards have had little real authority over finances, staffing, and curriculum. They have become bodies which administer decisions reached elsewhere. The future for education in New Brunswick will be much enhanced if school boards can be given greater real authority—and responsibility—for the management of education within their districts. To this end, they should be freer to set goals for the schools of their districts, and to assess the results achieved, in comparison with those achieved elsewhere. To be able to carry out this role properly, they themselves must be prepared to grant greater operational responsibilities to the principal and staff of individual schools. In their new role, board members will also need more reliable data, and training, to measure their own effectiveness, the effectiveness of their schools and the administrators who are responsible to them.

School boards operate within powers delegated to them by the provincial government. If they are to be effective, and to perform roles which will attract the participation of competent and interested board members, the provincial government must be committed to consulting and working with local boards to establish the mission of local schools, realistic and measurable educational and social goals for each district, and appropriate indicators of school and student achievement. Beyond that, the provincial government must grant boards the management powers needed to improve public school education if electors are to be able to hold board members accountable for the performance of district schools. If the provincial government is not prepared to grant such authority, the only realistic option may be to abolish school boards and to make the provincial Department of Education directly responsible for school operations.

It has to be a source of concern, that in the first election of members to the the new school districts in May 1992, there will be contested elections for fewer than half of the positions. Almost half (46 per cent) of the positions have been filled by acclamation, and there are no candidates at all for 8 per cent of the places. And this at a time when the districts are new, and the entire educational process is the object of fundamental reappraisal.

This is a clear message that much more has to be done to establish a credible role for the Province's school boards. If parents and community leaders want schools to achieve higher standards and to prepare young people more effectively for the world in which they will have to work and live, there must be a stronger bonding—and more productive working relationships—between the community and its schools. Our children will not respect excellence or strive to do their personal best if the adult community does not demonstrate a long-term commitment to improving the quality of education and schools.

42. Therefore, the Commission recommends that effective steps be taken to strengthen the role and responsiblity of school boards in the setting of goals, managing the resources, and assessing the achievements of the schools in their communities, and to create a closer partnership between schools and the communities they serve.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

In this the demi-millennial year of Christopher Columbus's famous voyage, we fear we must report that, if there exists a Great Northwest Passage to educational excellence, we have not found it.

Those who had hoped we would condemn the present system and recommend root-and-branch reforms may be disappointed in our report. On the other hand, those who hoped we would discover that the only thing wrong was that there are too few resources being allocated to education may also be disappointed. We have made, we believe, extensive and serious recommendations for change, but they are changes designed to strengthen the system, not replace it.

In arriving at our recommendations, we have been guided by a couple of principles which are both ancient and modern. The first is that people work harder and better and smarter when they can see the purpose of their labour, when they are consulted about directions to be taken, and when they have a just measure of control over the circumstances in which they work. Within the spirit of our times, this translates, we believe, into (a) a democratic process of mandate-making and goal-setting for the system, such as we propose in chapter II, and (b) the devolution of authority from the centre to the circumference: from the Department of Education to the school boards; from the school boards to the schools; from the schools to the teachers; and from the teachers to the students.

The centre, of course, must hold, and we would not propose that the Department of Education relinquish its primary responsibility for education, a responsibility it has discharged effectively and well, any more than we would suggest that the teachers turn the running of the school over to the students. But such is the legal and political hegemony of the Department that there is little fear of this. A greater danger is that school boards will continue to languish with little authority and an undefined role; that in the absence of defined authority and role, they will continue to do things which are better left to superintendents and principals; that administrators will decide alone what should be decided collegially with teachers; and that teachers will continue to decide for students what they should have a part in deciding for themselves. We have laid great emphasis on co-operative/partnership models of teaching, learning, and management because we believe they are consistent with the spirit of the times and of the people who make up our system of education.

In the realization of this principle, the response of the Department will be crucial. In a highly centralized system, it wields more authority and influence than perhaps any other ministry of education in Canada. It has performed its part so conscientiously that there is little criticism of it and little clamour for it to share its control. The system it administers, however, is in need of leadership as well as management, leadership of the kind we describe in chapter VI. It would, in our view, be a telling act of leadership on the part of the Department if it moved quickly to define a meaningful role for school boards, a role which gave them greater scope for leadership of their own.

The second principle that has guided us is that all public institutions should be accountable to the people who support them, and should be able to demonstrate that they are meeting their goals effectively and efficiently. The current reform movement in education has been accompanied in most jurisdictions by a call for stricter accountability measures and, in some, for the tying of budget allocations to "value-for-money" auditing. The insistence by policy makers on greater accountability is often influenced by the view that schools are failing in their mission, are resistant to or, worse, incapable of change, and must therefore be forced to carry out the social responsibility they have been assigned.

While the demands in Canada for better educational accountability have not been as high-pitched as they have been in some other countries, they have been persistent and are gaining strength. In outlining its vision for education in the 1990s and introducing its accompanying plan of action, Alberta gave prominence to the importance of measurable results and the need to account regularly to Albertans on educational standards and the performance of students in relation to those standards. The government of British Columbia, in a response to its own recent Royal Commission on education, also stressed the need for greater accountability.

What George Radwanski said in his 1987 Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education and the Issue of Dropouts is becoming a standard feature of educational policy:

> *there can be no effective pursuit of excellence in educational outcomes without meaningful accountability, and there can be no meaningful accountability without measurable standards of accomplishment.*

As our report says in many places and in many ways, we do not believe that New Brunswick's school system is failing or that it is unresponsive to the need for change. We do, however, believe that it is failing at least some of the students who attend it and that it is not doing as well by many of the rest as it might. The causes of this are, as we indicate, many and complex, and most of them cannot be remedied by the schools alone. Beyond the fact, however, that government and the people it represents have a right to ask for proof of effort and progress of the institutions they fund, it can also be beneficial in other ways to organizations to give a regular and systematic accounting of their performance. The process of setting fresh goals and devising ways of achieving them, and of measuring progress along the way, can help build a spirit of collective purpose and common cause within an organization.

We have not made much ado about accountability in this report, but we have attempted in various ways to strengthen the means by which the public school system is accountable to its various stakeholders: collective goal-setting, greater use of external examinations, more conscientious and systematic evaluation of teachers and administrators, a more rigorous school-year policy. We have also, and with equal conviction of its importance, sought to strengthen society's accountability to and for its schools: for example, increased resources and enhanced support, effective partnerships, and inter-departmental agreements to address issues the schools cannot resolve alone. It was our intention to strike a proper balance between those two aspects of accountability.

In Issues Paper I, we wrote as follows:

> *The fundamental question is . . . are we in New Brunswick ready to commit to a quest for educational excellence that will go beyond marginal adjustments? are we persuaded, or even willing to be persuaded, that such a quest and the effort it will entail are really necessary to give us the tools to compete and develop as a province as we move from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy? do we have the leadership, educational, social, and political, to mobilize and direct us? and, if we do, are we prepared to work harder and more co-operatively to achieve our goals? If the answer to these questions is no, then this Commission's work will disappear like a yodel in the Swiss Alps. If the answer is yes, then the Commission can be a catalyst for change in New Brunswick society that will have lasting benefits for our own and our childrens' future.*

The Commission believes that what it has recommended in this report goes well beyond marginal adjustments. We believe that, taken together and effectively implemented, our recommendations represent a substantial reform of the public school system. We were emboldened to go as far as we have because we were persuaded by what we heard and read from New Brunswickers that there is a strong wish to make our schools better. Whether the Commission has been wise enough in its choice of changes, only time will tell, and then only if our recommendations are implemented in the manner and spirit intended. This, however, we think we know: if the intelligence, energy, and commitment we have witnessed these past months can be harmonized and harnessed in the interest of our schools, there is no reason why our province cannot have a truly excellent educational system for a new century.

APPENDIX A

Recommendations

Chapter II - Learning

Purpose

1. That, after consultation with students, teachers, trustees, parents, and other interested parties, the Department of Education establish a set of aims for New Brunswick schools, and further that, within the context and spirit of those aims, each school create its own set of aims or statement of purpose.

Outcomes and Measurement

2. That the province of New Brunswick undertake, in a serious and comprehensive way, to set standards and measure results in its school system. This means specifying clearly what students are expected to know and be able to do at various stages of their schooling, in at least the core curriculum. It means implementing broad-range performance-based tests at key intervals of the educational process. It also means assisting teachers to improve their own evaluation of students and to use both school-based and external results to help remediate the specific learning needs of students.

3. That the Provincial Achievement Examinations (PAEs) be made mandatory and include at least mathematics, sciences, language arts, and second language subjects, and represent at least 30% of the student's final mark.

The Social Environment

4. That the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Education reaffirm their long-term commitment to the implementation of integration by ensuring that services for students with special needs are made available on a reasonable and equitable basis across the province.

5. That additional resources in such areas as guidance and counselling, resource and methods teaching, child psychology, and speech pathology be directed towards elementary school students.

6. a)That procedures be established for use by districts to provide for enrichment activities for gifted and talented students; in addition, that more formal ways of recognizing special talents and achievements be considered.

b) That the Department continue to initiate and assist in the development of teacher-training courses by universities in New Brunswick with an aim to heightening awareness and developing teaching strategies and capabilities to deal effectively with gifted and talented students.

7. a)That consideration be given to ensuring that the most vulnerable of expectant mothers—those who are young, poor and single—have access to good pre-natal care and nutrition;

b) That nutrition programs be made available to children in need as they move through pre-school programs and into the school system;

c) That consideration be given to developing and/or enhancing screening mechanisms for the identification and referral of children-at-risk from birth to kindergarten entrance, whose development is delayed as a result of physical or intellectual disabilities or because of socioeconomic deprivation;

d) That current early intervention approaches for children-at-risk be broadened and strengthened. This might include giving consideration to integrating early intervention and day-care programs, to ensure that all children enter kindergarten "ready to learn."

8. That an inter-departmental committee be struck, with representation from Education, Health and Community Services, and the Solicitor General, to draw up a protocol for signature by the respective ministers detailing the responsibilities to be assumed and the resources to be provided by each in dealing with egregiously disruptive behaviour.

9. a)That emphasis in government capital funding of schools be shifted from new construction to a greater investment in the maintenance and upgrading of existing schools;

b) That as enrolments continue to decline, the Department of Education eliminate portable classrooms, many of which do not constitute a suitable environment for teaching and learning;

c) That teacher education programs, both pre- and in-service, include modules that will equip and encourage teachers to use available resources to improve the aesthetic qualities of their classrooms and the common areas inside and outside school buildings;

Chapter III - Teaching, Teachers and Training

Teacher Training

10. That all teachers complete an undergraduate degree (normally in arts or science) either before or concurrently with the B.Ed.

11. That faculties of education, arts, and sciences at all New Brunswick universities develop procedures to ensure the effective coordination of teacher education programs, and further that they consider together the best configurations and content of academic courses for those programs.

12. That in light of the almost unanimous judgement of teachers about its value, an extended practicum continue to be a part of pre-service training, and that the universities, the two teachers' associations, and the Department of Education redouble their cooperative efforts to select, encourage, support, and reward effective and conscientious supervising teachers.

An Induction Year

13. That during the first year a teacher be assigned a light teaching load (which would extend to extra-curricular, committee, and supervisory duties), be provided with a mentor teacher chosen for his or her excellence in teaching and for the ability to work well with and to help colleagues, and be given such other support as may be necessary to get off to a successful start in teaching.

Certification

14. a)That teaching certificates at the secondary level specify the subject areas the holders are qualified to teach.

b) That universities (faculties of arts, science, and education) reassess the academic requirements for teachers in light of the actual needs of the schools and ensure that all students receive both a sound general education as well as sound training in the disciplines of concentration.

Teacher Assessment and Recognition

15. That every school board, in consultation with the Department of Education and the Teachers' Associations, review its procedures and practice for the evaluation of teachers and administrators and ensure that they are effective to their purpose, which is to make a just assessment of performance and provide information to their employees which may be helpful in their professional development.

16. That the Department of Education, the Teachers Associations, and the school boards form a joint committee to prepare a program of rewards and recognitions for excellence in teaching.

Professional Development

17. That in addition to the current arrangements for sabbatical leave, the Department and the boards give consideration to the introduction of shorter-term leaves, leaves which might range from a week to several months. This should be done selectively, with a panel of teachers and administrators selecting from among the candidates on the basis of written proposals for projects that relate to a school, district, or provincial priority of direct benefit to the students. It would be a requirement that the professional benefits of the leave be shared with colleagues through such vehicles as conferences, workshops, one-on-one collaboration, or publication.

18. That, in planning in-service and professional developmental activities, the Department of Education and the school boards give strong emphasis to pedagogical strategies, both the theory and practice of them.

Faculties of Education

19. That New Brunswick faculties of education carry out regular, systematic surveys of their graduates (say, five years and ten years after graduation) as well as, and simultaneously, of the administrators to whom they report (principals, vice principals, or superintendents) to

discover what aspects of their training teachers have found most and least useful, and to seek advice on how education programs could be improved.

20. That faculties of education extend the practice of using outstanding teachers to give university courses on a part-time or seconded basis.

21. That the Government of Canada create a fund for the improvement of education along the lines recommended by Dr. Stuart Smith.

Collective Bargaining

22. That the provincial government and the teachers' union develop means, including an appropriate process of final offer selection, to reduce the degree of stress and obviate the disruptions created by existing patterns of collective bargaining.

Chapter IV - Curriculum

Reorganizing the Grade Division

23. That a physical and philosophical reordering of the current grade structure be undertaken. The restructuring would result in the extension of high school downward to include grade 9. The Department of Education should, depending on local demographic patterns and until one structure is judged to be clearly superior to the other, institute either a K-8 sequence or a K-5 and a middle school from grades 6-8.

Curriculum: A Common Core

24. a)That the curriculum reflect a commitment to provide for the development of the whole child. In addition to their study of the humanities, mathematics, and sciences, students should have the opportunity to develop skills in the fine arts and the physical arts. The curriculum provide a common core of studies in four categories:

1. Humanities (French/English, Social Studies, French/English as a second language).
2. Mathematics and Sciences
3. Fine Arts (Music, Visual Arts)
4. Practical Arts (Physical Education, Technology, Cooperative Education)

b) That in the first nine years (K-8) there be a common curriculum, providing for content in each of the four categories indicated above. The high school program (grades 9-12) consist of a broad common core, with a limited number of options relating to the intended career goals and interests of the students.

Elementary

25. That while we are not ready to advocate that New Brunswick move immediately to an ungraded primary, we believe that it is an educational development that deserves serious assessment and would recommend that the Department of Education carry through with its plans to make such an assessment.

Middle Years

26. That consistent with the need to focus on the unique challenges presented by adolescents, the following initiatives be undertaken:

1. schools adopt an interdisciplinary approach to teaching;
2. teachers be assigned a minimum of two subjects for the same class;
3. schools experiment with multi-grade or cross-grade classroom groupings;
4. each student be assigned an adult mentor from among the staff of the school.

High School

27. That the following revisions be made to the high school program:

1. with the addition of Grade 9, the number of compulsory courses required for graduation be increased to 23, of which 4 must be in mathematics and 3 in science;
2. optional courses be selected from a more limited list of courses, including those offering greater linkages with the labour market, such as co-operative education and apprenticeship;
3. the Department undertake a review of the principle of streaming and the current status of programs at different levels with a view to ensuring that all graduates possess a common core of knowledge and skills required to meet future academic and career challenges.

Alternative Programming

28. That while endorsing a common curriculum from K-8 and a common core in high school, the Department and districts consider the desirability and feasibility of creating alternative schooling and programming to serve our diverse student population.

Equity

Human Rights

29. 1. That the Department of Education

(a) ensure that the curriculum and pedagogical materials used in the schools are both free of racial and cultural biases and contribute to the enhancement of the understanding and respect of racial and cultural diversity;

(b) pursue the policy direction for human rights it has adopted;

2. That the Department of Education, the teachers' associations, and the faculties of education take appropriate measures to ensure that teachers are equipped to deal with human rights issues;

3. That the education system at all levels be monitored to ensure that it is free of discriminatory practices in hiring and promotion.

Women

30. That measures be taken to ensure:

1. That the curriculum and pedagogical materials used in the schools be stereotype-free and present a positive image of women's role in and contribution to society;

2. That appropriate guidance and career counselling be available to female learners to influence their course selection and nurture their interest for a wide choice of career options, including and particularly careers in applied sciences;

3. That collaboration exist between the Department of Education and the teachers' associations for the implementation of a strategy aimed at preparing female teachers to assume management and administrative positions.

Aboriginal Education

31. That, recognizing the need for role models for Aboriginal students, high priority be placed on the training and employment of Aboriginal teachers in the public schools of the province. That emphasis be given to recruiting such teachers in schools with significant Aboriginal student populations, and that the Department ensure that all curriculum materials present Aboriginal people accurately in historical and contemporary terms.

Extra- and Co-Curricular Activities

32. That the Department of Education review the current financial and program provisions relating to extra- and co-curricular activities, and seek partnerships with the private sector, foundations, and others to enhance such activities.

Length of the School Year

33. That the following statement be adopted:

1. The school year will constitute 200 days, of which a minimum of 190 days of instruction will be scheduled by each board in every school in each school year.

2. The school year in New Brunswick may not begin before the third week of August and may not end later than June 30. Within these dates each school board will determine when the school year within its jurisdiction will begin and end. Every effort should be made to have the instructional year begin after Labour Day.

3. Administrative days, professional development days, storm days, marking days, parent-teacher days, and semester turnaround days will not count as instructional days.

4. The organization of the instructional year will be designed to ensure minimum disruption during the year because of professional development, in-service, civic or provincial elections, union meetings, etc.

5. The Department and Districts will review the structure and scheduling of the high school semesters to determine the feasibility of completing the first semester to coincide with the Christmas Break.

Class Size

34. That some further lowering of class size be a long-term objective, to be implemented when there are more resources available for education than is the case just now. In the short run it would be best to concentrate efforts and whatever modest funds there may be for this purpose on the elementary school, especially at the primary level, where both research and common sense predict a greater return on investment.

Chapter V - Partnerships

Students as Partners

35. That the Department of Education assist the school boards in the elaboration of policies and procedures for the meaningful participation of students in the operation of their schools.

Parents-Community Partnerships

36. That, following consultation with the school boards, the New Brunswick Home and School Association, and Le Comité de Parents du Nouveau-Brunswick, school advisory committees be prescribed by legislation for each school, and that the Department of Education, also in consultation, develop guidelines for the participation of volunteers in the schools.

Business and Education Partnerships

37. That to promote sustained province-wide participation of the private sector in the public school system, and to ensure the quality and consistency of the formal activities sponsored, a provincial educational collective or compact (which might be called EduCom N.B.) be established.

Government and Government Agencies as Partners

38. That the province pursue negotiations with the federal government with a view to securing a long-term commitment to the enhancement of the stay-in-school initiatives and to providing state-of-the-art technology throughout our public school system.

39. That, building on initiatives already begun, formal inter-departmental protocols be developed, that clearly spell out the roles and responsibilities of government agencies providing services to students.

40. That formal inter-departmental protocols be entered into for the provision of support services to the learners and their families as well as for the community use of schools for educational, recreational, and cultural purposes.

Chapter 6 - Leadership

School Leadership

41. That all departmental headships, vice-principalships, principalships, and superintendentcies become term positions. Those appointed would hold office for a fixed period (we would suggest, for example, three years for a department head and five years for a principal), after which a review of performance would be conducted. Reappointment could occur where there was mutual satisfaction. Otherwise, the incumbent would be entitled to resume full-time teaching.

The Leadership of School Boards

42. That effective steps be taken to strengthen the role and responsiblity of school boards in the setting of goals, managing the resources, and assessing the achievements of the schools in their communities, and to create a closer partnership between schools and the communities they serve.

APPENDIX B

Some Guiding Principles*

The Commission believes that a discussion of educational reform should start by defining principles and should end by establishing goals. The ten principles set out below are not commandments; we expect that they will be refined and augmented in the ensuing consultations.

1. Much has been accomplished by our current education system. Nothing will be gained and much could be lost by undertaking reform in a way that appears to devalue the achievements of those who have been or are responsible for that system.

The New Brunswick education system during the past twenty-five years has been responsive and innovative. The case for reassessment and possible restructuring proceeds not from its deficiencies relative to other systems, but from the economic, technological, social and environmental imperatives that are giving rise to educational restructuring in other advanced societies and to large-scale adjustments to major institutions in our own.

2. Education is a lifelong continuum and encompasses all learning efforts, both institutional and non-institutional, designed to enhance individual competence.

Because this is so, it is necessary to ensure freer and easier movement between the various parts and stages of the continuum. It is also necessary to ascribe value and give formal recognition to all learning efforts that people undertake, including on-the-job training and adult education.

3. The distinction commonly made between educational and training is both erroneous and harmful. There can be no real education without training, and it becomes increasingly true that there can be no effective training without education.

The failure to recognize and apply this principle hobbles our education system by creating artificial barriers to mobility, flexibility and opportunity. This is true at the post-secondary level where transfer of educational credits and the design of joint programs between community colleges and universities have been neglected. It is also true in high schools where technical and vocational programs are too often segregated, both psychologically and pedagogically, from regular academic programs.

4. Only measures which are part of a well thought-out strategy of improvement are likely to prove effective.

Piecemeal reforms by themselves have not produced the desired effects elsewhere. An education system is more analogous to an organism than to a mechanism: it will reject even a healthy organ if that organ is not well matched and integrated.

5. To stand a chance of succeeding, reform measures must be accepted and supported by the custodians of the system.

After almost a decade of reform initiatives and legislation in the United States, a recent Brookings Institution study (Chubb and Moe, Politics, Markets and America's Schools) has concluded that there is little evidence to suggest that the quality of American education has improved at all. While there are many reasons for this, the failure to enlist the commitment of those who operate the system is probably the most significant.

6. Nothing matters so much to the success of an educational enterprise as well-selected, well-trained, well-motivated, well-respected, well-supported, well-rewarded, and well-administered teachers.

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* Reprinted from Issues Paper I.

Teachers have made considerable progress over the past quarter century, especially with reference to salaries, qualifications and facilities. In contrast, it might be argued that their scope for the exercise of professional judgement has, if anything, diminished, as has their collective morale. Some greater "empowerment" of teachers would seem essential to a healthy and attractive profession. With that empowerment, however, should go an expectation of greater accountability for educational outcomes as well as educational processes.

7. Schools in contemporary society have many roles and responsibilities, but greatest emphasis must be given to the cultivation of those communicational, computational and analytical skills on which intellectual competence and life-long learning in all fields depend.

To some extent, schools have always had residual social responsibilities; teachers and curricula have been expected to address the needs of the "whole" child. This has placed what has often seemed an intolerable burden upon the school and made priority-setting difficult. There is, however, nothing inconsistent between having a multi-purpose mission and giving central importance to the cultivation of a constellation of skills, knowledge, and attitudes which are prerequisite to achievement in almost all fields of human endeavour.

8. An education system is the creature of its society; no society would wish or tolerate schools, colleges and universities which did not reflect fundamentally its own character and values. To last, therefore, educational reform must be accompanied by comparable attitudinal and institutional reform in the rest of society.

We cannot import model educational systems from other countries no matter how successful they appear to be. While learning from the success of others, we must nevertheless find solutions which are consonant with the values, acceptable patters of behaviour and fundamental character of our own society. In the case of New Brunswick, that fundamental character includes, pre-eminently, two legally equal linguistic communities.

9. While education is and should remain within the constitutional jurisdiction of the provinces, there is a compelling need for a national strategy in education and training that includes the federal government, especially at the post-secondary level.

Federal government policies in such areas as social assistance, health, justice, employment and immigration, second-language instruction, multiculturalism, communications, science and technology, and the environment all have a bearing on the economic and social circumstances in which learning takes place. No significant improvement in the quality of education, training or research in Canada is possible without a harmonization of the interests and efforts of the two senior levels of government.

10. Given the way authority, responsibility and resources are distributed in our society, it will require the active support of all educational stakeholders, including business and labour, to effect significant and lasting improvements to education and training.

The major impediments to educational excellence are such that governments can no longer tackle them alone. To meet the challenge posed by such issues as child poverty, workplace illiteracy and the need for better training and apprenticeship programs, will require effective partnerships among those who need, those who can provide and those who can pay.

APPENDIX C

Overview of Briefs

> *Nothing will be gained and much could be lost by undertaking reform in a way that appears to devalue the achievements of those who have been or are responsible for that system. (Issues Paper I)*

It is to the credit of the majority of the respondents to Issues Paper I that they respected the first guiding principle enunciated by the Commissioners. Obviously, if one is going to propose reforms, then one is going to imply some deficiency in the existing system. However, most respondents demonstrated that they understood and were sensitive to the pressures, especially the social and cultural pressures, under which the schools are required to operate. Indeed, while the respondents identified many deficiencies in the system, most of the submissions indicated a fundamental feeling of good-will towards the teachers.

The sensitivity did not inhibit criticism, but it did help to give a constructive cast to many of the submissions. There were some, of course, from stakeholders who felt threatened and became defensive; there were others which were motivated by self-interest and sought to promote the interests of an agency, or of a public or private sector of society, or, in a few instances, of an individual, but even these, in the main, did so fairly and honestly. There was some impatience, but little intolerance.

In a fairly early public meeting, one of the Commissioners observed that no clear consensus appeared to be emerging. Indeed, one might wonder, given the built-in conflicts in the issues paper, whether it was reasonable to expect any consensus to emerge. How does one reconcile, for example, the generally agreed need for more sustained, uninterrupted instruction with the equally valid need for ongoing in-service programs for teachers? How does one reconcile the legitimate requirements that the system be accountable to students, parents and public with the well-established limitations of standardized, summative testing or with the recognition that this form of testing may inhibit initiatives in a system which is also being required to promote a spirit of enterprise? Can one expect to achieve inclusive education and at the same time to raise internal grading standards, or to create extra learning time for those students who learn at a slower rate without incurring the stigma of failure or the detrimental effects of repeating grades?

Dilemmas and paradoxes of this kind are the daily diet of those who try to design, administer and operate an educational system. Not surprisingly, some respondents, with the best of intentions, found themselves arguing simultaneously for measures which are inherently very difficult to reconcile. The manner in which Issues Paper I presented the issues perhaps contributed to this problem. Many respondents followed the organization of the paper, carefully addressing each section in turn without recognizing the potentially contradictory implications entailed.

Ironically, out of this confusion did emerge something approaching a consensus. A number of thoughtful briefs recognized that what was lacking was a clearly defined, overall sense of purpose for education. Just what do we want our education system to accomplish was a question either explicitly asked or strongly implied in many of the briefs.

> *If we do not have some clearly articulated goals for our education system, we shall simply muddle along for the next twenty-five years until some other government decides it is time again to re-evaluate the system.*

Particularly pronounced was concern that the Commission clearly enunciate the degree of emphasis which should be attached to the three generally accepted educational responsibilities - personal, civic and vocational.

The general tenor of the briefs made it clear that most respondents were not content with an education system driven by exclusively economic objectives.

> *I want my child to learn the freedom that education brings. I want him to understand that to live in ignorance is to live a restricted life.*

Even briefs from business and economic interest groups agreed that their agenda did not represent the whole of education. Most briefs contained a strong current which sought to address the civic and personal development of the child. Many, however, were prepared to concede a need for greater emphasis on economic goals, provided that "broader objectives" are not sacrificed. It was frequently pointed out also that a "balanced" education does, in fact, contribute to work-place efficiency. What a person is, in a broad sense, impacts on what that person is on the job and on the contribution which both the person and the job make to the community.

> *We need more than functional skills; we need hopeful spirits.*

Another area of expressed or implied consensus was the concern that the schools and, in the front line, the teachers, are being required to address social and socially-derived personal needs and problems which are either beyond their competence or make unreasonable demands on their time and energy. Teachers have traditionally coped with problems of this kind, but the escalation of these problems has clearly placed a great strain on the system. The adjacent positioning of two sections, Children At Risk and Stay-in-School Initiatives led some respondents to collapse a host of sub-categories of "special needs," so that frequently it was difficult to determine which section of the school population was actually being addressed. It was, however, very apparent that is an area of deep, if confused, concern and one which needs to be dealt with as a high priority.

Closely related to these concerns was a fairly general recognition that there is a need for more efficient coordination of all of the groups and agencies which seek to address such problems. This may be viewed as one reflection of a broader persuasion that solutions to many of the problems faced by the school system require concerted professional, parental and community cooperation. The concept of sincere and honest partnership as the basis for educational culture, especially with respect to parental involvement, received strong endorsement. The pervasiveness of this belief was one of the most encouraging features of the briefs as a whole.

There were some briefs which were critical of the Commission's process, in particular of the time-lines permitted and the sense of haste. Ironically, the loudest complainants on this score tended to produce the longest briefs!

However, the large majority of the over four hundred individuals, groups and agencies which responded to Issues Paper I did so very positively - not in the sense that they accepted all of the propositions advanced in the initial document but in the sense that they were prepared to expend a great deal of time, thought and energy to formulate a careful and constructive response, even when they disagreed with the Commissioners' proposals, even when they wondered whether their views would be registered. There is both sadness and hope in the conclusion to a very conscientious submission from one community Home and School Association:

> *In conclusion, we feel that the Government's goals are admirable but lofty. We feel that the decision of what is going to be done has already been made in a politically expedient way and that our viewpoints will not be considered. We did feel, however, that in order to criticise we should first put forth our ideas and viewpoints on the issues and we can then say that we tried.*

That people were prepared to try, and to try in a spirit of co-operation and mutual respect, was perhaps the most positive message received from the briefs. It should be recorded that all of the briefs were read, annotated and carefully considered by the Commissioners.

APPENDIX D

Briefs Received

Private Citizens

4th year students of Home Economics at UNB

Un groupe d'élèves de l'école Louis J. Robichaud

Adams, G.N.

Alliston, William

Ball, Lynn

Belliveau, Peter

Belyea, Penny

Bird, Terry

Bishop, Norma A.

Bradley, Yvonne & David Smith

Brander, M. Caroline

Breault, Richard

Bryenton, Heather

Buckley, Muriel

Campbell, Laverne

Carlisle, Josephine & Barbara Merrithew

Clark, Heather

Cochrane, Dennis

Cochrane, George

Copeland, Elaine

Corbett, Barbara

Costello, Linda

Craig, Kathryn

Davidson, Alan S.

de Vries, Nicolaas

DeMerchant, Lisa

Deschesnes, Etienne

Dionne, A.K.

Dionne, Claude

Dionne, James A.

Doak, Gordon L.

Donahoe, Lyanne & Françoise Young

Donnelly, F.K.

Duguay, Rose-Marie

Fanjoy, Andrea

Fortin, Jacques

Fowler, Bruce

Frampton, William

Furlong, David

Gay, Danny

Gilmore, George W.

Godry, L.

Goodfellow, D. Vernon

Herbert, Anita

Hickie, Tom

Hines, Cynthia

Hoyt, Joan E.

Huggard, Turner & Patricia

Irving, Lynn

Johnston, Mark

Jones, Constance M.

Jory, D.H.

Kennedy, Alice

Kenny, J. Gordon

Knight, Burton W.

Koops, Herman

Laidlaw, Sheila

Lalonde, D.H.

Lavoie, Sylvain

Leavitt, Robert & Midge

Llambia, John

Lumbsden-Levesque, Mabel

MacAlpine, Keith

MacAudy, Jim

MacLean, A.R. Sandy

Martin, Mike

Maskill, Susan

McGeachy, Duncan

McMillan, Kathy

McNutt, Rod

Meagher, John

Melanson, Jean-Paul

Michaud, Guy R.

Murray, Greg & Carolyn

Nardini, Marie-Anne

Olmstead, David C.R.

Parker, Charles E.

Peacock, Kurt

Rayner, Robert

Rehorick, Sally & David

Rickards, Sue

Robichaud, Anne & Joseph

Robson, Shirley

Rogers, Ernest

Roy, Armand

Roy, Louise

Salvage, J.

Scott, Heather C.

Simms, T.M.

Smith, Albert

Smith, Dr. Preston A. & Jane L.

Soucie, Lorraine & Jack

Steeves, Charlotte

Stewart, Kim

Stuart, M.F.

Tilley, Arvella

Titus, Brien & Linda

Titus, Jamie

Urquhart, Cynthia

VonWeiler, Joost R.

Ward, Jerry

Wery, Anne

Widders-Lorren, Paul

Williams, Hugh

Wilson, Majerie

Wood, Melanie

Wright, Beth

Young, Jeanne E.

Public School Personnel

Individuals

Babineau, Suzanne, Paula Bourque, Lauriette Mallet, & Jocelyn Savoie

Belliveau, Jean

Bennett, Danielle

Bérubé, Berthier

Boutôt, Marie & Léonard Plourde

Bowes, Edward

Chiasson, Aubert

Crain, Robin

DeCourcey, Dawn

Duplissea, Herb

Foulem, Brigitte, Jeanne D'Arc Robichaud, Anne Jacques, Bathurst

Gallant, Soeur Lorette

Gauvin, Donald

Gervais, Jean-Louis

Gionet, Emile O.

Haché, Jules

Haché, Rose-Marie

Hachey, Hector

Hubbard, Linda

Hughes, Barbara

Jones, Carolyn

McLaughlin, Peter

Morisset, Denis

Nadeau, Yvan R.

Ouellet, Jerry

Ouellette, Jean-Yves

Pâquet, Simon

Pinet, André

Poulin-Losier, Rose-Hélène

Prescott, Barbara

Raynor, Nancy

Richard, Monique

Ridler, Neil

Roy, Albert

Roy, Armand

Smith, Jackalyn

Vaughan, Yvonne

Verge, Jacques

Verge, Jacques, & Jacqueline Boudreau

Wallace, William & Harmut Swedersky

Williams, Ralph

Schools

Albert Street Junior High

Bathurst Elementary School

Bathurst High School

Centre Samuel de Champlain
Cité des Jeunes

École "Le Tournesol" de Petit Rocher

École François Xavier Daigle

École La Découverte de Saint-Sauveur

École Louis Mailloux

École Mathieu-Martin

École secondaire Népisiquit

Florenceville Intermediate School

Fredericton High School

Garden Creek School

Hampton Elementary School

Hampton Junior High School

James M. Hill High School

Kennebecasis Valley High School

Liverpool Street School

Lower Lincoln Elementary School

Oromocto High School

Perth-Andover Intermediate School

Quispamsis Elementary School

Rothesay Park Elementary School

Saint John High School

South Bathurst Elementary School

St. Stephen High School

Others

Conseillères en pédagogie conseil scolaire 33

Educatrices de la Maternelle conseil scolaire 41

Fredericton High School Faculty Association

Le personnel en intervention précoce de la Péninsule acadienne

Personnel des bibliothèques scolaires, conseil scolaire 41

Post-Secondary Personnel

Collège communtaire du Nouveau-Brunswick - P.J. Maillet

Mount Allison - Brian McMillan, Head - Education Department

Mount Allison - Ian Newbould, President

New Brunswick Community College - Saint John - Beverlie Dietze

St. Thomas University - Russell A. Hunt, Acting Vice-President

St. Thomas University - Heather Richmond, Acting Chair - Department of Education

Université de Moncton - Fernand Arsenault, Doyen, Faculté des Arts

Université de Moncton - École d'éducation physique et de loisir - Normand Gionet

Université de Moncton - Léonard J. Goguen

Université de Moncton - Marianan Kant

Université de Moncton - J.E. Louis Malenfant

Université de Moncton - Victorin N. Maillet, Doyen, Faculté des Sciences

Université de Moncton - Gilles & Gaétane Nadeau

Université de Moncton - Omer Robichaud, Doyen, Faculté des sciences de l'éducation

Université de Moncton - Jean-Guy Vienneau

University of New Brunswick - R.L. Armstrong & T.D. Traves, President & Vice-Presiden

University of New Brunswick - Dean of Education - Gerald M. Clarke

University of New Brunswick - Division of Adult & Vocational Education

University of New Brunswick - Early Childhood Centre - Marion Cosman et al.

University of New Brunswick - Vivian Edwards, French second language teacher education

University of New Brunswick - Faculty of Arts - Peter Kent, Dean of Arts

University of New Brunswick - Faculty of Education - Charles Verhille, Rick Blake, & Marian Small

University of New Brunswick - Frances Gendreau, Head of Home Economics Department

University of New Brunswick - Ann Gorman Condon, Director of Humanities & Languages

University of New Brunswick - Andrew S. Hughes

University of New Brunswick - Alfred Kleusberg, Department of Surveying Engineering

University of New Brunswick - Gordon Mason

University of New Brunswick - Marion Small, Math Education Centre

University of New Brunswick - R.S. Stuart

University of New Brunswick - Walter J.Watts

School Boards

Conseil Scolaire #1

Conseil Scolaire #5

Conseil Scolaire #12

Conseil Scolaire #13

Conseil Scolaire #32

Conseil Scolaire #33

Conseil Scolaire #39

Conseil Scolaire #41

Conseil Scolaire #51

Conseil Scolaire #53

District 8

District 10

District 15

District 16

District 18

District 19

District 20

District 22 & 23

District 24

District 25

District 26

District 27

District 28 & 29
District 30

District 31

District 36

District 38

District 40

District 42

District 50

District 54

Teachers' Associations

Association des directions d'écoles, conseil scolaire 13

Association des directions d'écoles francophones du N.-B. (ADEFNB)

Association des enseignantes et des enseignants francophones du N.-B. (AEFNB)

Cercle 5 - AEFNB - Caraquet

Cercle 6 - AEFNB - Shippagan

Cercle 7 - AEFNB - Tracadie

Cercle 12 - AEFNB - Bouctouche

Cercle 13M - AEFNB - Moncton

Cercle 13S - AEFNB - Shédiac

Cercle 32 - AEFNB - Grand Sault

Cercle 33 - AEFNB - Edmundston

Cercle 35 - AEFNB - Dalhousie

Cercle 37 - AEFNB - Campbellton

Cercle 41 - AEFNB - Bathurst

Cercle 51 - AEFNB - Fredericton

Cercle 53 - AEFNB - Newcastle

District 10 - NBTA - Chatham

District 19 - NBTA - Rothesay

District 20 - NBTA - Saint John

District 26 - NBTA - Fredericton

District 30 - NBTA - Florenceville

New Brunswick Teachers' Association

New Brunswick Teachers' Federation

Principals & Vice-Principals Council

Home and School Associations

Alma Home & School Association

Barnhill Memorial Home & School Association

Bessborough Home & School Association

Bureau de direction du foyer-École Notre-Dame

Comité de Parents de Kedgwick

Comité de Parents de St. Quentin

Comité de Parents de Richibouctou

Connaught Street School and Family Association

Forest Glen Home & School Association

Frank L. Bowser Home & School

Harkins Home & School Association

Les Comités de Parents du N.-B.

New Brunswick Federation of Home & School Associations Inc.

Quispamsis Home & School Association

Rothesay Park Elementary School Home & School Association

St. George Elementary Home & School Association

Other Educational Organizations/Associations

Association des agents de l'administration scolaire du N.-B.

Association des conseillers-ères pédagogiques du N.-B.

Association des conseillers-ères scolaires francophones du N.-B.

Association des directions générales scolaires du N.-B.

Association Francophone des conseillers(ères) en orientation du N.-B.

Association of New Brunswick Student Services Administrators

Canadian Parents for French - N.B.

Committee for Excellence in Education - District 8

Construction and School Education (C.A.S.E 19)

Fredericton High School Student Representative Council

Le Comité d'action des maternelles, Saint-François

Maritime Association of Life Skills Coaches

New Brunswick Association for Continuing Education

New Brunswick Committee on Literacy

New Brunswick Home Economics Association

New Brunswick Kindergarten Association

New Brunswick School Superintendents' Association

New Brunswick School Supervisors' Organization

New Brunswick School Trustees Association

Saint John Learning Exchange

Saint John Learning Exchange

Secondary School Supervisors

Soeur Anne-Marie Savoie, Groupe d'intervenantes de la Péninsule Acadienne
SOI Systems Canada, Inc.

Conseil provincial des éducatrices en préscolaire

Atlantic Science Curriculum Project

Secondary School Supervisors (District 19)

Un Groupe d'interventantes de la Péninsule acadienne

General Organizations/ Associations

Advisory Council on the Status of Women/ Conseil consultatif sur le statut de la femme

Association for Bright Children

Association of Professional Engineers of New Brunswick

Association pour l'integration communautaire de Tracadie

Bathurst Liberal Association

Beaverbrook Art Gallery

Bibliothèque régionale Albert-Westmorland-Kent

Bibliothèque régionale du Haut St.-Jean

Canadian Association for Young Children

Chaleur Regional Development Commission

Chaleur Regional Library

Coalition for Justice in Public Education

College of Psychologists of New Brunswick

Comité local de livraison et de gestion - Stratégie Jeunesse

Commission industrielle du Restigouche Inc.

Committee for the Formation of a New Brunswick Professional Librarians' Association

Conseil économique du N.-B.

Conseil francophone pour l'éducation interculturelle du N.-B.

Conseil provincial des sociétés culturelles

Construction Education and Training

CUPE 2745

Dialogue New Brunswick

Digital Atlas
Early Childhood Coalition Petite Enfance

Entre Amis

Fredericton Music Festival

Fredericton Public Library Board

Human Development Council

Interagency Council for School Health

JALMALV

John Howard Society

Kennebecasis Valley University Women's Club

Le comité diocésain de Catéchèse, Diocèse de Bathurst

Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick

Main Street Baptist Church, Saint John

McCain Foods Ltd.

Miramichi-North Shore Association of United Baptist Churches

Moncton High Performance Skating Centre for the Maritimes

NBTel

New Brunswick Arts Board

New Brunswick Association for Community Living

New Brunswick Branch of Canadian Institue of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum

New Brunswick Child Welfare Association Inc.

New Brunswick Federation of Labour

New Brunswick Figure Skating Association

New Democratic Party

Rothesay Baptist Church - Social Action Committee

Saint John Board of Trade

Saint John North Community Action Group

Saint John Regional Library

St. Paul's United Church Outreach, Fredericton

United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces

Université du 3^e âge du Sud-Est Inc.

York Regional Library

Government Departments, Agencies or Organizations

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

Department of Advanced Education and Labour

Department of Education - Indian Education Advisor

Department of Education, Program Development and Implementation Branch

Department of Education - Student Services Branch

Department of Finance - Employee Relations Services

Department of Municipalities, Culture and Housing

Department of Natural Resources and Energy

Human Rights Commission

Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission

Premier's Council on Health Strategy

Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons

APPENDIX E

Groups Consulted

1. Public Meetings (attendance ranged between 25 and 150):

   Edmundston

   Florenceville

   Fredericton

   Grand Manan

   Moncton

   Newcastle

   Rothesay

   St. Stephen

   Woodstock

2. Schools/School Boards/Teachers:

Schools:

   Centre Samuel-de-Champlain - Saint John

   École Mathieu Martin - Dieppe

   École Soleil Levant - Richibouctou

   Fredericton High School - Fredericton

   McAdam Avenue School - Fredericton

   Rothesay Collegiate/Netherwood - Rothesay

   Simonds High School - Saint John

School Boards - Districts:

   8, Newcastle

   19, Rothesay

   20, Saint John

   30-31, Woodstock

   41, Bathurst (F)

   42, Bathurst (E)

Teachers' Associations:

   13S, Shediac

   19, Rothesay

   20, Saint John

   33, Edmundston (F & E)

   41, Bathurst (F)

3. Major Stakeholders:

   Association des conseillers(ères) francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick

   Association des conseillers en pédagogie du Nouveau-Brunswick

   Association des directions d'écoles du Nouveau-Brunswick

   Association des directions générales scolaires du Nouveau-Brunswick

   Association des enseignant-e-s francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick

   Comités de Parents du Nouveau-Brunswick

   Cooperative Education Teachers Association

   Members of the Faculties of Education of all New Brunswick universities.

   Mr. Pete Keilty/Mr. Normand Martin/Officials - Department of Education

   New Brunswick Teachers' Association

   New Brunswick School Superintendents Association

   New Brunswick School Supervisors Association

   New Brunswick School Trustees Association

   Youth Council of New Brunswick

4. Other groups:

   Atlantic Chamber of Commerce

   Brunswick Mining and Smelting Co. Ltd.

   Canadian Manufacturers' Association

   Canadian Parents for French

   Dialogue New Brunswick

   Federal Prosperity Secretariat

   Four students from the "Faculté de l'éducation de l'Université de Moncton"Human Rights Commission

   Frontier College

   Junior Achievement

   Learning Unlimited - Nashwaaksis

   Life Education Services of New Brunswick, Inc.

   Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC)

   Moncton West/Riverview Rotary Club

   Moncton Headstart

   Mr. David Perley, Indian Education Adviser, NB Department of Education

   NB Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Moncton

   NB Committee on Literacy

   NB Interagency Council for School Health

   NBTel

   New Brunswick Federation of Labour

   Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons

   The Commission also met or talked with a host of parents, teachers and other interested citizens.

APPENDIX F

District and School Innovative Practices

The main body of the report refers on several occasions to this Appendix. In response to the hearings and briefs, which clearly indicated that the school system is already alert to and acting upon many of our concerns, we wrote to School Superintendents, requesting them to submit examples of innovative practices in their districts. The response was such that it has made this Appendix very difficult to compile. Space does not permit the inclusion of all of the responses received, and to select models would be both invidious and contrary to our intention.

We are therefore requesting the Department of Education to make a compilation of the responses so that districts and schools, when they are not already doing so, can share in the efforts being made in other jurisdictions.

In this Appendix, we shall make some general observations and include a sampling of the initiatives which are being taken, not to draw attention to exemplary innovations but to illustrate the range and inventiveness of district, school and community response to identified needs. We would emphasize that this is a sampling and, for this reason, we have not identified the source of the responses.

We have referred frequently, both in Issues Paper I and in the body of the present report, to the need for empowerment at the district and, more particularly, at the school level. In fact, the response to our request for evidence from the field suggests strongly that this empowerment is already occurring and that its occurrence is accompanied by a sense of accountable, collegiate responsibility. Many districts, many schools, many teachers do recognize the challenges which confront them and are seeking the best ways to make schools serve the best interests of the students and society.

The manner of their response reflects very clearly the character of the community which the schools serve. The smaller, rural districts which responded tended to demonstrate closer, more intimate links with the community, though localized communities within the larger, urban centres also revealed a similar relationship. The larger centres tended generally to respond to challenges with more institutionalized solutions. We intend no disparagement on either score; it may be worth remembering, however, that no single solution is going to serve the needs of all communities in New Brunswick.

All districts, both large and small, urban and rural, demonstrated that they have moved to address many current concerns. It is clear that district administrators have responded to Federal and Provincial programs to support stay-in-school initiatives; the main concern is how long these programs will continue. Schools have also responded to curriculum innovation, particularly at the elementary level, and have actively endorsed new approaches in Language Arts, Mathematics and Science.

STAY-IN-SCHOOL AND CURRICULUM

These responses are mainly re-active, though they also show inventiveness deriving from local circumstances.

- The ACES program is an alternate program serving troubled adolescents (ages 13-17) who have difficulty coping with regular programs, who have had irregular attendance, who have been disruptive, who are achieving below grade level, and who, generally, may be deemed "at risk". The program is housed separately from regular schools with a pupil-teacher ratio of less than 1:10. On site, students escape the regimentation of regular schools with flexible arrangements, routines and schedules.

  Admission is regulated by an Admissions Committee consisting of senior school and district administrators and special-services personnel. Length of stay in the program is variable and students return to regular schools at the earliest opportunity.

- This program is multi-faceted and supported by two special projects under the Youth Strategy Program. A central feature of the program is the involvement of the teacher implementation team. The team, under the guidance of the Vice-Principal, has developed an effective, ongoing needs-based program.

They have worked with the District staff to incorporate alternate funding and the use of technology, particularly in their special needs program.

The program is offered in five (5) components: W.O.W., Co-op Education, Independent Study, Work Study or Special Needs.

- Based on a success-oriented instructional philosophy, Invitational Education encourages the interaction and the participation of different groups or individuals involved in education: students, teachers, parents, school management and community representatives. The initiative encourages these concerned groups or individuals to cooperate in redefining the present school structures so that it may better answer the needs of today's youth. In the longer term, this initiative is aimed at the academic achievement of students and the reduction of school drop-out by bringing changes at the level of self-value and emotional health among the student population.
- Telecommunication has opened the door into the Information Age for class 6A students in our school. Through international link-up with grade 6 pupils in Costa Rica, Belgium, and United States, they study about current and real life-based events, such as the Gulf War media reports in partner countries and the Costa Rican earthquake.
- Development of an Experiential Science Curriculum for Grades 1-9 - This project is intended to develop and implement a new science curriculum which will involve students in more hands-on science and include exploration of the local environment, increased computer use and networking with other schools and outside sources.
- A course entitled Deckhand 110 covers the following: chartwork and pilotage, navigation and general seamanship, marine radio, safety and survival, practicum, navigating and an introduction to the fishing industry. Discussions with fishermen and School Board members who are closely associated with the fishing industry and education indicate a high degree of acceptance. It is obvious that the training is most desirable and provides the industry with a more employable work force.
- The Inter Ed Program is a junior high school restructuring effort. It is an ungraded continuous progress, integrated academic program for 60 to 80 pupils of junior high school years in a multi-aged group under the guidance of 3 to 4 teachers. Critical elements of the program include team teaching, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, community service, flexibility, responsibility, remediation, enrichment, acceleration; a school within a school.
- In view of developing lifelong physical fitness habits in children, one school has integrated in its physical education program skating and swimming introduction courses.
- To better encourage, enhance, control and educate our children and make them more independent, a ten-session course entitled "Parent Dynamics" is offered to parents in the afternoon.
- An information course on the new program "Défimath" is being provided to the parents of students from first to third grade. This course is sponsored by the Community College.
- A group of teachers has developed a series of two texbooks for the purpose of helping students to develop better work habits. The first textbook presents a series of theorical concepts related to various themes such as time management, note taking, memory, stress, etc. Another chapter of this textbook deals with learning activities which will alow teachers to introduce their students in a practical way to the approach of studies, work, etc. The second textbook gives a number of tips and practical means which will help students improve their school work achievement.

Business Education Partnerships

A number of curriculum and instructional initiatives demonstrated the willingness of local business to cooperate with the schools in pursuing learning objectives.

- This project involves a community partnership that is unique because of the involvement of a broad spectrum of businesses of the automotive industry rather than a single company. The purpose is to provide all types of students with knowledge, exposure, and experience related to the auto industry. The ultimate purpose is to open the numerous career paths to our students, and to provide a pool of high quality students to the industry.

- Using a listing of employers of the region, approximately fifty students (on an annual basis) are exposed to job shadowing.

  Whenever possible, businesses and local resources are asked to co-operate with schools. For example, a group of grade six students spent one afternoon at the local saw mill. Or else, an educational visit is made to a maple sugar operation.

- One District has arranged for automotive teachers to participate with the service departments of local automotive dealerships for "one-day-plus" observation inservices at appropriate times and at frequent intervals. The dealerships were enthusiastic and responsive to the request.

- Development of local option credit courses at the Regional High School. The school has in the past offered courses in local industries - agriculture, lumbering, fishing -and in local history. It has had to be flexible in awarding credits for work students have done under the Work Orientation Workshop and Stay-in-School programs.

School Environment and Climate

Initiatives designed to make schools more inviting for students and to create an environment where children would feel respected and return respect featured in many responses.

- STET (Systematic Training for Effective Teaching) promotes a democratic classroom where students make choices and accept logical consequences. It emphasizes mutual respect and equality among all class members as well as teachers. Within such an environment, teachers who understand their own and their students behaviour, can teach creatively and successfully.

- Grade 7 Orientation - A format has been developed for assisting new students in moving to junior high school. In April, a visit to the Grade 6 classes is made to present information on the junior high school and to answer questions. In late May, the junior high school hosts each grade 6 class. One junior high student is assigned two or three grade 6 students to talk formally about classes, rules and expectations. The small groups tour the school together and talk together. The visit ends with a question and answer period. During the last two weeks of summer, all new students are invited to visit the school and to have another tour.

- In September 1991, a Maliseet Culture and Heritage program was introduced into Hubbard Avenue Elementary School. The main objectives of the program are to foster racial tolerance between native and non-native students, to develop an appreciation of Maliseet culture and history, and to teach Maliseet language. Two Maliseet instructors were hired to develop and teach the program.

- In one school, grade 6 students help the kindergarten to grade 4 students open their lunch pails. They teach them the lunch hour rules at the same time. Supervision is provided by the teachers.

- Members of the staff of Student Services provide training in communication and helping relations to high school level students. The principle behind this project is that a student will preferably discuss problems with peers. Students trained to become peer helpers are able to provide their peers with support, listening and information services on the resources available within the school and the community.

- The Science Olympics has been organized in such a way as to remove the competition aspect between individuals and between schools. Students from three schools were divided into teams so that each team had two members from each school.

- Positive Code of Student Behaviour & Handbook builds on opportunities to show pride in quality work, responsibility, consistency, reliability, punctuality, co-operation, respect, honesty — distribute it, teach it, use it consistently.

Community and Parents' Participation

We were especially impressed by the many inventive ways in which schools are reaching out to their communities and inviting the participation of parents. Allied to these are initiatives to improve communication.

- In a school, a volunteer is responsible for the school savings project. That person collects money from the students and make the deposit for them at the Caisse Populaire.

- For the purpose of maintaining a relationship between school and home, many schools produce a monthly paper. The articles are prepared by the school administration, the teachers and the students. The paper emphasizes, among other things, the achivements of children in many areas, and provide parents with information on the various school activities.

- On the basis of the importance for parents to better analyse and understand the nature of a typical day of their child in school, a special day entitled "A Day in School" is organized on an annual basis. All the activities are introduced in cooperation with volunteer parents.

- Introduction of a student broadcasting service - Info-communautaire.Preparation of a program broadcast on community television every 15 days.

- Municipal Awareness is observed by grade 5 students. Mock elections are held and students visit and take part in the Municipal Council.

- A recycling project was initiated in the Fall of 1990, after the Home and School Association expressed a concern about the use of disposables. The Environmental Partners Fund of the District participated in the funding for the project. This unique project brought together efforts by the children and volunteers for Charlotte County Recyclers and individual parent volunteers. There is interest in producing a video and the possibility of forming an environmental club has been discussed as a result of this project.

- At present, there are three (3) Parent Centres in a District. The Parent Centre is a facility where parents and children may participate in a variety of activities together. Emphasis is placed on the parent-child-school partnership and recognition is given to the principle that neither home nor school can accomplish educational goals alone. The school principal and staff are involved.

- In supporting the belief that during high school young people should be provided the opportunities to reach beyond themselves and feel more responsively engaged, a non-credit "Community/ School Service Unit" is provided for senior students to encourage them to participate in their community and/or school of which they are a part.

- A showcase of fine arts is presented annually by elementary, junior high and senior high students. The showcase includes music, visual and dramatic arts. Students perform in a choir, a band, a play or an art exhibition. The production involves students, teachers and parents working together in program design, customing, set design, props, stage make-up, lighting, ushering and publicity.

- Volunteer program - Grandparents act as volunteers, reading to the slower students, modelling interest and motivation in reading.

The instances cited here could be replicated and multiplied, many, many times. Some represent major innovations; others are comparatively small-scale initiatives. It is when one reads a response from a school listing perhaps ten or twelve such efforts, however, that one realizes the importance of the impact which they have collectively on the life, learning, welfare and happiness of the students. The responses provide abundant testimony that certainly not all teachers feel dispirited or powerless to make improvements; indeed, the responses testify to a healthy vibrancy in many schools which we find very encouraging.